

May

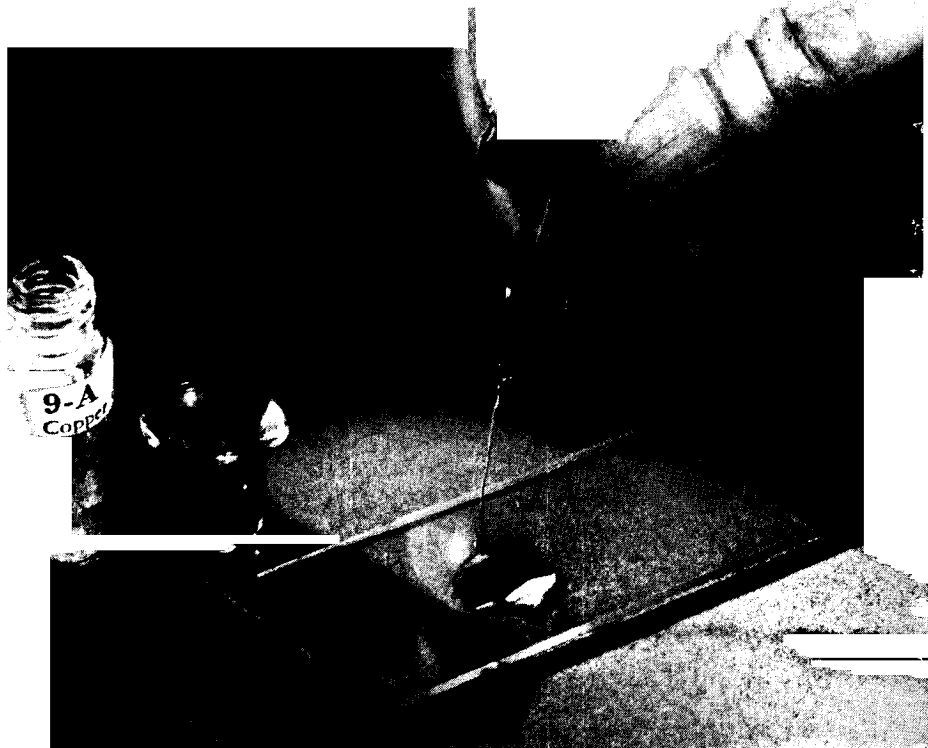
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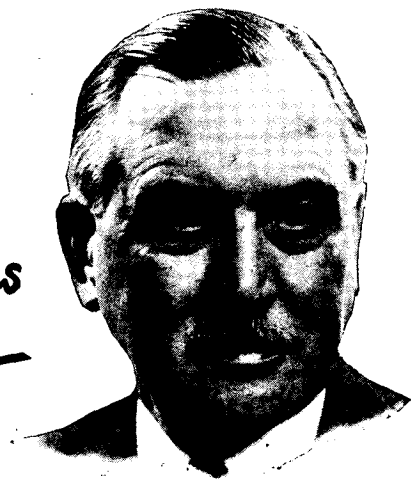
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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xi)

Curl. A new turn in detective fiction. Study the photographs and Get Your Man.

★★★ **NOT UNDER FORTY**, by Willa Cather. \$2.00. *Knopf*. Extremely uneven: a really brilliant sketch of Flaubert's niece, and several other pieces which are not in the same class.

★★ **JAPAN'S FEET OF CLAY**, by Freda Utey. \$3.75. *Norton*. Yeoman effort to prove that Japan, through her ventures in empire, is riding to a fall. If the book contained fewer hysterical statements, its conclusions might appear more valid.

★★ **EPILOGUE: A CRITICAL SUMMARY**, 1936. Two volumes, edited by Laura Riding and Robert Graves. Seven shillings, sixpence. *Seizen Press, London*. Sophisticated essays on crime, homiletics, literature, and marginal themes: with some exceptional modern poetry thrown in. Very good reading.

★★ **MORE HOUSE FOR YOUR MONEY**, by Elizabeth Gordon and Dorothy Ducas. \$2.50. *Morrow*. A manual of helpful hints for the prospective builder, listing the Hows and Whys of construction.

★★ **MOONCUSSERS OF CAPE COD**, by Henry C. Kittredge. \$2.75. *Houghton, Mifflin*. Tales of the beachcombers of the New England coast, derived from the recollections and memoirs of Cape people. A book rich in drama, heroism — and certain anecdotes relating to the less honest of the shipwrecking gentry.

★ **PRESS TIME**. \$2.00. *Books, Inc.* Representative collection of news stories, features, and editorials from the pages of the New York *Evening Post*.

★ **BRIEF FACTS**, by Blair Tavenner. \$2.50. *Putnam's*. More helpful hints for those people who haven't the time to memorize ab-

brevisions, Biblical characters, athletic records, constellations, famous inventions, *et al.*

★ **SHIPS OF THE WORLD'S BATTLE-FLEETS**, by E. C. Talbot-Booth. \$1.50. *Appleton-Century*. Photographs and descriptions of modern men-of-war, with emphasis on His Majesty's Navy.

★ **SAGITTARIUS RISING**, by Cecil Lewis. \$2.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. Not many of those lads survive, who went from the playing fields of England to combat-flying on the Western Front in 1915. Mr. Lewis is one of them; he tells his story vividly and with simplicity.

★ **THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC**, by I. A. Richards. \$1.75. *Oxford Press*. Professorial discussion on the thesis that "there is room for a persistent, systematic, detailed inquiry into how words work that will take the place of the discredited subject which goes by the name of Rhetoric".

★ **THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE**. With a Biographical Note by Lyon N. Richardson. \$2.00. *Columbia University Press*. Facsimile pages from the first true magazine to originate in the American Colonies. Only three issues are known to exist; parts of each are reproduced here.

★ **TIME AND CHANCE**, by Alexander Black. \$3.50. *Farrar & Rinehart*. For people who like shifting scenes in life and pictures and letters. Jack Tennant says to the author, on the *Sunday World*, "Black, you and I will get along fine if you don't give me any of this damned art." On that basis, so may the reader.

★ **MAN'S WORLDLY GOODS**, by Leo Huberman. \$2.50. *Harpers*. Hors d'oeuvres for Marxists, garlic for Fascists, poison for Capitalists. The author labors furiously to prove that if Dr. Karl Marx ruled the world, every man would own three Hispano-Suizas, a Parisian mistress, and a Palm Beach cabana.

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WHAT does it mean to you and yours when you read that "the speed of freight trains has been stepped up 43% in recent years"?

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1927

TEN YEARS AGO

THIS OCTOBER

1937

It is interesting to turn back the pages of the years and read the record of a business. . . . For time has a way of testing purposes and policies. Good years and lean reveal the character of men and organizations. . . . The fundamental policy of the Bell System is not of recent birth—it has been the cornerstone of the institution for many years. It goes back to the beginning of the business. . . . On October 20, 1927, it was reaffirmed in these words by Walter S. Gifford, President, American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

"The business of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and its Associated Bell Telephone Companies is to furnish telephone service to the nation. This business from its very nature is carried on without competition in the usual sense.

"These facts have a most important bearing on the policy that must be followed by the management if it lives up to its responsibilities.

"The fact that the responsibility for such a large part of the entire telephone service of the country rests solely upon this Company and its Associated Companies also imposes on the management an unusual obligation to the public to see that the service shall at all times be adequate, dependable and satisfactory to the user.

"Obviously, the only sound policy that will meet these obligations is to continue to furnish the best possible telephone service at the lowest cost consistent with financial



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safety. This policy is bound to succeed in the long run and there is no justification for acting otherwise than for the long run.

"Earnings must be sufficient to assure the best possible telephone service at all times and to assure the continued financial integrity of the business. Earnings that are less than adequate must result in telephone service that is something less than the best possible.

"Earnings in excess of these requirements must either be spent for the enlargement and improvement of the service furnished or the rates charged for the service must be reduced. This is fundamental in the policy of the management.

"With your sympathetic understanding we shall continue to go forward, providing a telephone service for the nation more and more free from imperfections, errors or delays, and always at a cost as low as is consistent with financial safety."

The American MERCURY

THE AUTOCRAT *vs.* THE CONSTITUTION¹

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

AT THE time of sending this issue of THE MERCURY to press, Mr. Roosevelt is in the thick of giving a very mean and sorry exhibition of what Walt Whitman called "the never-ending audacity of elected persons". His original proposal with regard to the Federal Bench needs no description or analysis here. The discussion it has aroused has made its character so clear that no disinterested person in the country need fail to see it for precisely what it is. When all comes to all, it is simply a proposal to add a kept judiciary to a kept Congress. No such flagrant and specious bid for the reorganization of our governmental system into a peculiarly odious type of absolutism has ever been made by any public servant.

Nor do Mr. Roosevelt's subsequent pleas in extenuation need any long discussion here, for their feebleness and disingenuousness have already been made abundantly clear to the public. His methods of dragooning, moreover, his appeal to emergency, his insistence on headlong haste, his use of the argument from dreadful consequences — all these stand before the country as demagoguery of a most repulsive order; they need no comment; they need only characterization. What could be more sophistical, more purely *ad captandum*, than his suggestion that the device of adding six new judges to the Supreme Court at the present time would in some way temper the effect of floods and dust

¹ This is Mr. Nock's regular State of the Union paper. Because of the present great importance of his subject, the article is given primary position in the magazine.

storms; or that it would somehow tend to avert the panic in the stock market which he sees impending? If a pickpocket spun such irrelevant yarns before the humblest chicken-court in the country, how far would they get him?

It would now seem high time for our editors and publicists to leave off a pedantic discussion of Mr. Roosevelt's proposal, and confine themselves to characterizing it as it deserves, and as in any kind of sense and reason they all know it deserves. Especially is it time to drop the nauseous practice of slathering their strictures on its author with soft soap. Why should they longer go so far out of their way to assure the public that while they believe Mr. Roosevelt's proposal is most objectionable, they also believe his intentions are in all respects what they should be? This seems merely another way of saying that Mr. Roosevelt is either too stupid to know what he is doing, or else too obtuse to be aware that what he is doing is improper; a poor sort of compliment in either case. Why go on with the transparent farce of assuming that Mr. Roosevelt may be trusted to make a scrupulous use of the power he demands, and that his proposal is dangerous only because it opens the way for some supposititious

successor who might be less scrupulous? Such puny avoidances placate no one, nor do they impress anyone with anything but the obvious lack of straightforwardness inherent in them.

Why, indeed, go out of one's way to assure the public that Mr. Roosevelt is quite above any notion of becoming an autocrat in the bad sense, and that he would exercise his autocratic power, if he had it, with due respect to the traditions of our government? What ground of assurance is there for all that? One could hardly predicate it of any man, and there is notoriously nothing in Mr. Roosevelt's public record to justify its being predicated of him, but quite the contrary. Indeed, the testimony of his career in the Presidency, to go back no further, bears substantial witness to his having been fashioned by nature out of the very stuff of which the worst and most dangerous autocrats are made.

In the present instance, for example, he has shown conclusively — has he not? — that his idea of a popular mandate is a blank check. In a matter of such moment as the one he proposes, he had the opportunity as late as last Summer to announce his intentions and thus to find out precisely whether the popular mandate would stretch

that far; and a manly man who had no axe to grind and desired to play fair with the people would have done so. Instead he played the invariable game of the born autocrat when on his way to usurpation, for it is of the very essence of that game to conceal one's intentions towards a prospective perversion of a popular mandate.

Again, in the present instance, he has shown himself gifted with a full measure of the dangerous autocrat's stubborn self-will. Instead of proposing any one of the three measures which are regular, appropriate, and fully competent to his professed purpose, he insists on one which is arbitrary, irregular, and inappropriate; and his arguments for its competence are specious and far beyond the point of reason. That measure will do no more than give him some immediate assistance in overriding an obstacle to the furtherance of his own purposes; nor is it possible to believe he intended it to do more than that, because for the permanent settlement of the economic difficulties which he says it aims to settle, it will so manifestly do nothing. As the Baltimore *Evening Sun* dryly remarked after his first speech on the subject, "If the situation is as bad as the President painted it last night, his pro-

posed cure is about as effective as painting a cancer with iodine."

Again, a characteristic mark of the dangerous autocrat is his porcine indifference to the moral quality of any means which can be mustered to serve a personal end. In this respect, Mr. Roosevelt's conduct is as far as possible removed from that of his honest predecessor in the governorship of New York, who though a devout Federalist, refused to turn a sharp though strictly legal trick which Hamilton urged on him in the campaign of 1800, and which would have assured Mr. Jefferson's defeat. For four years Mr. Roosevelt has stood by, like a famous character in the New Testament, consenting unto the death of integrity in the electorate by wholesale and intensive Tammanyization in his own interest. He has consented unto the persistent fomenting of class-hatred by his sycophants and janizaries, all in his own interest, and on occasion has himself preached the gospel of divisiveness with a force and fervency worthy of Spartacus. Everyone knows the means by which his control of Congress was obtained, the means by which it is continued, and by consequence the means which are now being employed at high pressure to gain him

control of the judiciary; and everyone knows that it would be base flattery to call those means immoral. They are essentially the methods of the inquisitor, the methods of *force majeure*.

Once more, the natural-born autocrat is vindictive. He has the uneasy self-conscious touchiness of the *arriviste*, and meets objection or opposition, however reasonable, with the rancid temper of a spoiled child. Mr. Roosevelt has exhibited this disposition often enough, and under circumstances which are striking enough, to make it unpleasantly conspicuous. In the present instance the country cannot well help observing that he has put both his proposal and his arguments for it in the most inconsiderate and — there is no other word for it — the most offensive form he could have chosen. Those who can pretend that in this he had no retaliatory intent, are reduced once more to the dilemma of attributing to him either an unconscionable stupidity or an unconscionable obtuseness.

The foregoing list of characteristics which mark the natural-born autocrat is by no means complete, but it is enough. It is certainly not to the point to vilify Mr. Roosevelt for such serious defects of character as he displays, or to make

those defects a target of cheap wit; but on the other hand it is not to the point to butter him up with any pretense that those defects do not exist, that they are anything other than they are, or that they do not distinctly disqualify him for a proper exercise of the power he demands. There is no need for getting up a great heat of moral indignation over them or a great bitterness in denouncing them; one does not revile a tone-deaf person who applies for the job of leading an orchestra. One merely makes it clear that nature has disqualified him for the job, and shows why. To do more than this is unbecoming and indecent, but to do less than this is to deal dishonorably with the music-loving public.

Those of us who are forty years old can well remember Woodrow Wilson's incurable affliction with the same megalomaniac delusions that Nature has so unfortunately visited on Mr. Roosevelt; and we can equally well remember the calamitous consequences which they brought about. Our publicists all knew Mr. Wilson's record; they all knew the traits which made him untrustworthy and potentially most dangerous; they all had this knowledge from the outset of his public life as president of Princeton University. If at the first gun of his

campaign they had warned the public of these traits as being those of the natural-born autocrat, if they had clearly set them forth and analyzed them, showing how needful it would be in the event of his election to hold his tendencies towards autocracy firmly in check — if they had done this, it is possible that the country might have been spared considerable damage and humiliation; and whether so or not, they would at least have done their plain duty to the public.

So now that another President is bidding for autocratic power, it should be made clear, without heat or animosity but in the plainest terms, that he is quite untrustworthy; and the natural disabilities which make him so should be explicitly set forth. It is not enough to say that no man should be made an autocrat, for while this may be true, it is not directly to the point. Generalizations of this sort are confusing and may well be put aside. The matter at issue at the moment is whether Mr. Roosevelt is qualified by nature to exercise properly the power he demands; nothing but that. Manifestly he is not. So far from his being given any extraordinary powers, his natural disabilities plainly intimate that such powers as he has should

be cut down to the minimum prescribed by a most literal rendering of the Second Article of the Constitution; and our publicists should be forthrightly saying this and showing cause for it.

If they do not do this, I submit that they are putting the country in a bad way. They are leaving a clear field for the inert thoughtlessness of the masses who are now idly saying that "anything F.D.R. wants is good enough for me". If the people wish to establish an autocracy, temporary or permanent, they have every right to do so. The Declaration of Independence is as explicit on this point as human speech can make it. But it would seem a matter of mere common sense to consider very carefully what kind of autocrat they are going to get. Our national history shows that no country could be expected to go to pieces faster than ours, or to wreck itself more completely, if its destinies were permitted to hang indefinitely on the whim of an individual who by every known turn of mind and temperament was disqualified for directing them. This being true, the public should be all the more distinctly warned against the danger of experimenting with Mr. Roosevelt in the role which he proposes to fill.

THE RED ROAD TO WAR

BY HAROLD LORD VARNEY

WILL America find herself fighting as an ally of Soviet Russia in the next World War? The question may sound fanciful, but there are deep-moving currents in American politics today which are steadily impelling the United States toward Moscow's foreign policies. A subtle propaganda offensive, outmatching anything which has been witnessed here since the Allied ballyhoo of 1915-16, is being pressed on a score of fronts by the domestic apostles of Litvinoff. Unopposed by any counter-agitation, this propaganda has made a profound impact upon the Hitler-hating "Liberal" citizenry who now see Russia as the destined savior of Western democracy.

The story of how pariah Russia has succeeded so amazingly in breaking down the once impenetrable hostility of the American public will stand as a classic of Levantine statecraft. For the change has been maneuvered, not by the Communists themselves but by "Liberal" allies who are

proclaimed opponents of the Communist philosophy. It has been achieved by romantic peace advocates who are now turning from a faith in a moribund League of Nations to the ideal of a balance of power built around the "pacific" policies of Soviet Russia. It has been furthered by members of racial groups whose outraged resentment against Hitler's Jewish repressions has been transmuted into indiscriminate sympathy with all his enemies. It has been supported by shrine-worshippers of eighteenth-century democracy who have succeeded in persuading themselves that the totalitarianism of Fascism is a deadlier threat to democracy than the dictatorship of the proletariat. Together, these non-Communist groups have administered such a publicity lashing to Hitlerism that a huge American public has come to accept as undebatable the preposterous thesis of the lesser evil of Russian Communism. This about-face has taken place so quickly that many Americans are not yet conscious of the

new orientation. It is easy, however, to understand how it has occurred.

Until a few years ago, Russian world propaganda was a blanket revilement of every "Capitalist" institution. It was directed with equal savagery against the Capitalist Democratic State, and against the Capitalist economic system. It loudly scorned the League of Nations as the rubber stamp of finance capitalism. Its contempt for "Liberal" pacifism was undisguised. In all its contacts with the non-Communist world, it was provocatively plain that the Communist mind moved in a different ideological dimension. And under such propaganda conditions, the progress of the Comintern abroad was leadenly slow. The great "Liberal" and pacifist public which now is the first intellectual line of defense for Stalinism, feared Communism even more deeply than it feared Mussolinian Fascism — then just emerging. Everywhere, Moscow was regarded as the mortal challenger of democracy, and its fiercest opponents were the Blums, the Vanderfeldes, and the Staunings, whose hope to achieve Socialism democratically was the favorite target for Soviet ribaldry. That Russia under Communism would ever be

allied with non-Marxian Western democracy was an hypothesis too ludicrous for contemplation.

The change came about five years ago when the triumph of Hitlerism in Germany led to a reconstruction of the whole Soviet strategy. The absurd ease with which Hitler exterminated the powerful German Communist Party was a staggering blow to the Comintern. It introduced into the Communist mind the gnawing fear that perhaps, after all, World Socialism was not predestined. A sense of their isolated impotence dawned upon the Russians. Shaken to their depths, the dogmatic Moscow leaders, for the first time, subjected their world strategy to an unsparing reconsideration. And out of these post-Hitler introspections emerged a program which has revitalized Communist activity in every democracy in the world. The program has come to be known as the strategy of the "United Front".

Psychologically this program bases itself upon the recognition that every society demands a scapegoat. Men sustain faith in their own beliefs by holding up to scorn some antithetic philosophy which they surround with interdicts. It is the self-protective reflex of a challenged social order,

Since 1917, it had been the unhappy fate of Communism to occupy this scapegoat niche in every democratic nation. The strategy determined upon by the Stalinites was to deflect this hue and cry by giving the world a new scapegoat—Fascism. The moment was propitious for such a maneuver. So long as Mussolini with his vast popularity among order-admiring conservatives had been the single embodiment of the Right, an offensive against Fascism would have been unconvincing. But Hitler's triumph made Fascism much more vulnerable. Not only did it identify Fascism with a Germany which had been the hated military foe of half the world only a few years before, but it also introduced the race question into the world forum. Already, a powerful racial group, controlling enormous publicity resources, was building up a new demonism around Hitler. To impartial minds, such a reaction on the part of world Jewry was quite understandable. It was obvious to the Moscow master-minds that it would merely be necessary to hitch Communism onto the bandwagon of this mounting anti-Hitlerism to give Stalinism a halo instead of a stigma.

Of course, to achieve such rehabilitation, there would have to be

some apparent concessions in Communist policy. The old isolationism would have to be abandoned; the provocative note would have to be dropped from official Red utterances. Above all, Moscow would have to go through some sort of ceremonial gesture to reassure the "Liberal" world that Communism was no longer anti-democratic. This gesture was achieved by the promulgation of the new Soviet Constitution—a document as meaningless in its democratic reality as the constitution of a Haiti or a Santo Domingo. It found its reflection in this country in the preposterous campaign slogan of Mr. Earl Browder in 1936 that "Communism is Twentieth-Century Americanism". At the price of a few Libertarian phrases, Communism succeeded in convincing its former "Liberal" foes that it was no longer wedded to dictatorship. Fascism supplanted it as the new Beelzebub.

There was an offensive as well as a defensive purpose behind this stratagem. By allying itself with the democracy-supporting Capitalist "Liberals", Moscow reasoned that it would be able to drive a deadly wedge into the solidarity of world Capitalism. Hitherto, the definitive cleavage in world poli-

tics had been the struggle between Socialism and Capitalism. But with Communism wearing the democratic mask, a realignment which would virtually destroy the present Capitalist preponderance became a possibility. This would be accomplished by substituting democracy for Capitalism as the demarcation in contemporary politics. By so doing, the Marxists would be able to divide their Capitalist opposition into two warring factions, one of which, the democratic, would suicidally aid the Marxists to wipe out the Fascists. The Asiatic cleverness of this Russian technique may be perceived in the naïve wrath with which such domestic "Liberals" as Dr. Henry N. McCracken, Miss Dorothy Thompson, Dr. Harry E. Fosdick, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, to mention only a few, are now echoing the Litvinoff refrain that democracy must mobilize to destroy Fascism.

The strategy of the Russians in the pacifist field has been almost equally subtle. Hitherto, the pacifist enthusiasts have been irreconcilably anti-Communist. The church pacifists had been repelled by the proclaimed atheism of the Russian regime. The secular pacifists have been mindful of the militarization of the Russian people.

In international affairs, Russia, prior to the advent of the unctuous Litvinoff, had been a mischievous influence at Geneva. It seemed impossible that Communism would ever find champions in the gathering places of gentle peace. But a few years has seen Communism almost reversing its role. Where yesterday Moscow was hurling vitriol at Geneva, today Russia has become almost lyrical in its ardor for the League. Tovarich Litvinoff has seen both Germany and Italy depart from Geneva while he remains to coo convincingly over his visions of world peace. By spotlighting the Fascist powers as the eternal menace to the world, Russia has become a symbol to the pacifist mind of opposition to the war makers. Partisans of Comrade Caballero's Spain rhapsodize over Russia as the defender of established government and the protector of European democracy. Worst of all, Capitalist France, forgetting her obligation to Western civilization, has cynically contracted a military alliance with Russia which, under the pretense of peace, makes another World War inevitable by closing the doors to Franco-German amity.

Thus we see that, in a little more than four years, Russia has succeeded in bridging the gap which

once sundered her from the democratic and pacifist world. The most bloody representative of absolutism in Christendom, she has become the trusted ally of the democratic last-ditchers. The most insolently militarized power in Europe, she has become the pivot of the hopes of the pacifists. A revolutionary State, whose founders have defiantly proclaimed the purpose of carrying Communist revolt into every democracy in the world, she is accepted as a friend by nations in which she openly maintains Russian-directed revolutionary parties. And while she widens her alliances among the "Liberals", she has accomplished her subtle purpose of short-circuiting democratic wrath to Fascism as Public Enemy No. 1. It is a performance which, as a stage-piece of Stalinian perfidy, would fire the imagination were it not for an uneasy suspicion that half the Russian success has been actually due to the stupidity of the Capitalist "Liberal" leadership.

II

Extraordinary as has been this Soviet achievement in the field of diplomacy, it is, nevertheless, in Russia's military rebirth that Europe finds its most appalling chal-

lenge. When our "Liberal" Americans talk glibly of the possibility of American aid for Russia in a future war against Germany and Japan, they blink a factor which may determine history. The factor is that a triumphant Russia in such an anti-Fascist World War would inevitably become the master of the world.

Military strategists, still reasoning in values of the last world conflict, are prone to dismiss Russia as a satellite of the blazing Paris sun. It is difficult for the traditionalist mind to readjust itself to the possibility that a Russia which, under Czarism, came so humiliating a cropper in the 1900's, could be a potential European conqueror in the 1940's. But, unhappily, there are several inescapable reasons why the coming World War cannot be envisaged in terms of 1914. First is the obvious fact that Soviet Russia is very near the day when she will be the overshadowing military power in Europe. Time and the prodigious Russian birthrate battle in her favor. Political fact-dodgers, of course, may console themselves with statistical evidence that Russia's military strength is still hopelessly insufficient to attempt aggression abroad. But with a nation in transition, such as Russia, the important ques-

tion is not today's strength but the rate of tomorrow's increase. Once Russia catches up technologically with her European rivals—a point which the Stalin government is furiously approaching—the crushing superiority of her man-power and of her prodigal natural resources will be apparent.

What the Soviets can do tomorrow, with their second *Pialetka* triumphantly concluded, may be glimpsed by what the Red Army has already accomplished. Capt. Liddell Hart, in his recent survey of comparative European military power, has drawn a disturbing picture of this fanatical army. With a present peace-time strength of 1,300,000 men, seventy-three per cent of them enlisted regulars, Russia already tops any other European power. She is able to maintain her magnificently-equipped Far Eastern Army of 250,000 on the Manchukuo front to hold the back-door Japanese threat, and still marshal a Western army numerically superior to Germany's 550,000; France's 640,000 (of whom 200,000 are detached for colonial defense); or Italy's 600,000 (of whom 200,000 are immobilized in Ethiopia).

But behind this regular army, which incidentally has been quietly stepped up by 700,000 men

since 1933, stands the greatest trained reserve in Europe. Captain Hart observes:

It is said that the Red Army chiefs could mobilize 6,000,000 men at two weeks' notice and that by 1938, the total trained reserves will reach 10,000,000. This apparently does not include the youths below military age who, to the number of several millions, are receiving preliminary training under the auspices of the Osavakim and the Young Communist League.

The impetuous haste with which Russia is pushing her military preparations may be seen in her soaring war budget. Those American pacifists who emitted such an outcry last Winter when our own defense outlay topped the billion mark, may well consider the preparedness budget which was authorized on January 13, 1937, by the Soviet All-Union Central Executive Committee. Whereas, in the preceding year, defense expenditures had totalled \$2,960,000,000, this stupendous amount was increased for 1937 to \$4,000,000,000. Only a political neophyte could believe that Stalin would impose such a terrific load upon the straitened Russian economy without the purpose of aggressive war. The Soviet army is to be employed to complete the revolution at home "and in the world", it is officially stated.

What halts the Russian forces from the immediate achievement of overpowering superiority is, of course, the unavoidable lag in mechanization. But this retardation will pass with the rapidly accelerating development of Russia's mass production industries. That Stalin has succeeded in increasing his industrial production six-fold in the last decade is indicative of what he can further accomplish. Favoring the Soviets also is the fact that mechanization in Germany, France, and Great Britain is also in its beginning. Since Russia is unhandicapped by a caste-bound officer class, trained in the obsolete strategy of the pre-mechanization period, its speed toward the goal of a modernized army may prove much more rapid.

Already, reported Defense Commissar Voroshiloff at the Seventeenth Party Congress, the average mechanized horse power per soldier in the Red Army has been raised from 2.6 (in 1929) to 7.74 (in 1933). The present Russian superiority in tanks is conceded by military authorities, Captain Hart crediting the Red Army with 6000 tanks; while Soviet-made models used on the Madrid front are said to have proven superior to the German product. In aviation also, Russia is moving ahead

rapidly, reports placing her present air strength at anywhere from 5000 to 7500 planes, with the higher figure favored. Sixty per cent of the Soviet air fleet, announced Commissar Khripin last November, is composed of the most modern long-range bombers. "We possess hundreds of air destroyers," he elaborated, "capable of a speed of 360 miles an hour." A surprise feature of Soviet air preparedness has been the training of thousands of future soldiers as parachute jumpers. "From the skies, we can drop a battalion of fully-armed troops by parachute behind the enemy lines in ten minutes".

Military comparisons may be unconvincing reading for the civilian. A further factor, however, which heavily weights the scales in Moscow's favor, should be obvious to all. That factor is morale. "It is not men, it is the man" who determines the fate of wars, said Napoleon. If, in the coming World War, the Capitalist nations pit against Russia's Communist zealots a conscript army of disaffected and propaganda-eaten men, Stalin's triumph would seem certain. The collapse of the huge forces of the Romanoffs in the last World War — an army scourged to the trenches by the knout and the firing squad — was an unforgettable

demonstration of the futility of numbers without morale. And when, as in the case of Soviet Russia, we have a conjunction of both superior numbers *and* morale, we face a military imponderable which baffles prediction.

History abounds with instances of the impossibles which have been accomplished by inspired armies. Will Stalin's Red hordes repeat the exploits of Cromwell's Ironsides, or Dumouriez's revolutionary unconquerables at Valmy, or Omar's fanatics of Islam? The Red Army today is a military machine painstakingly selected from the teeming Russian millions for its Communist dependability. Of the 960,000 regulars, 48.9 per cent are already members of the Communist Party or of the Young Communist League. Two-thirds of the officers are Party members. With such a nucleus, any army which Russia could hurl into the field should be a scourge. Fascist armies whose combatants are fired by the same kind of indomitable counter-faith might stand up successfully against it. Democratic armies, infiltrated by Socialist and Communist propagandists, would probably melt helplessly before it.

Yet this issue of morale is bound up with an even weightier factor. Not only does Russia possess a po-

tential invincible army of attack, but she also has powerful allies behind her enemies' lines in the form of Russian-controlled Communist Parties affiliated with her Comintern. Even in an ordinary nationalistic war, these Communist minorities could be depended upon to sabotage the military preparations of their governments with ruinous effect. In a war with Mother Russia, their open defiance would be certain.

Only in the Fascist nations which have wiped out Communist organizations could we expect to see anything approaching a full marshaling of national strength against Russia. Armies of the democracies would be rocked with mutiny from the first mobilization call. Even the "Liberal" non-Marxists in the democratic nations, if we may judge by their attitude on peace-time Russian issues, would be lukewarm factors.

So we perceive that, from the standpoint both of present military potentiality and popular morale, Russia enjoys an overpowering long-pull advantage over her Capitalist contemporaries. But there is still another factor which is crushingly in favor of ultimate Russian hegemony. We refer to her incredible birthrate.

Short-sighted statesmen who are

aiding Stalin's foreign policies are oblivious to the fact that, regardless of the fortunes of war, present population trends threaten to reduce Europe to a swarming Russian continent within the lifetime of living men. The evidence is inescapable. The birthrate of non-Russian Europe has steadily fallen during the last half-century until the population no longer even reproduces itself. Fifty years ago the reproduction rate of Western and Northern Europe was 2.1. By 1911-14, it had fallen to 1.6. Since the World War, it has steadily dropped until, in 1933, it reached a sub-unity low of 0.9. Germany, England, and France are all below the reproduction rate. Italy, despite *Il Duce's* spectacular fight against birth control, is now down to the 1.5 rate and steadily losing ground. And while non-Russian Europe remains stationary or dwindles, the Soviet colossus, with the highest birthrate in Europe, is increasing its population lushly by 3,000,000 a year.

"If fertility and mortality remain in Western and Northern Europe what they were in 1933," writes Robert B. Kuczynski, eminent demographer, "the population which is now about 193 millions would reach its maximum of 196 or 197 millions in the late

1940's and, by the year 2000, would be reduced to about 150 millions. If the population of Soviet Russia continues to grow as, according to the official figures, it has grown, it would, by the year 2000, amount to about 650 millions."

Can there be any question of the future domination of Western civilization as we contemplate these figures? The Russian bear, now caparisoned in his crimson Marxian raiment, is advancing upon historic Europe with all the resistless momentum of a glacial slide. Can he be halted? By the most optimistic view, it would seem that there are only a few dwindling years in which he can still be checked by a united Western Europe, while his military and technological preparations are still uncompleted. But unfortunately, the non-Communist world is not united. France already has broken ranks and is serving as the pliant defender of Russian interests in the European concert. Influential forces in Great Britain and the United States, stampeded by the anti-Fascist chatter, are more antagonistic to Germany and Japan than to the insidiously advancing Soviets. The basic conditions for a successful counter-organization of the Capitalist forces against Russia are everywhere lacking.

III

While the United States, isolated by its protecting ocean, may be the last to feel the impact of this Asiatic advance, it would be fatuous to assume that we can remain permanently aloof while the established world is crumbling. The problems of Europe are our problems, and the collapse of the West before Stalinism would simply expose a solitary America to the next Soviet offensive. If Germany, Italy, and Japan, which are today desperately attempting to establish a *Cordon Sanitaire* about the Russian borders, are beaten down by the non-support of the democratic nations, it will be the bitter fate of the United States to find itself in a world in which Russia is supreme. Is it conceivable in such a political future that our own Radicals will not repeat here the same tragic holocaust of revolution which will have ravaged Europe? The danger, of course, will be that the struggle against Sovietism will not present itself to the Western world in the obviousness with which it is here stated. Soviet diplomacy will avoid a clean-cut issue: the conflict will be blurred by extraneous issues dividing Capitalism while Marxism remains overpoweringly united.

If Russia is not to be the final victor, a fundamentally changed attitude must be taken by world Capitalism — an attitude of realistic and unyielding anti-Sovietism. There must be a stern refusal to accept the bribe of Russian partnership in any of the causes which engage democratic enthusiasm. Above all, there must be a speedy abandonment of the suicidal campaign of anti-Fascism which is today splitting the Capitalist strength into futile factions. One need not be a sympathizer with the Fascist creed for one's own country to recognize the immense service which the Fascist nations are now rendering to the Western European cause by their isolation of Russia. If Germany and Austria, like Monsieur Blum's France, were in the control of pettifogging Socialists and "Liberals", the gateway to Western Europe would already be open to the Russian bear. To scream, as do so many of our American "Liberals", that the Western democracies should unite, with Soviet help, to destroy Hitler and Mussolini, is simply to play the political game of the Kremlin. It is to urge the destruction of the political dams which today are protecting the world against the Stalin flood. Hence, it is a commentary upon the mushy senti-

mentalism of American foreign thinking, that the vituperators against Fascism now practically dominate all intellectual discussion of foreign policy in this country, to the exclusion of any clear-sighted facing of the issue of Russia. The pacifist groups, obsessed with their wish-dreams for the League of Nations, have all become belligerently pro-Russian since Tovarich Litvinoff became the keynoter of the League.

On every side, we see incredible instances of this Russian conquest of American sympathies. A few months ago, Mr. Clark M. Eichelberger, director of the League of Nations Association, given a national radio hook-up to broadcast a New Year's message of peace, consumed practically his whole period with the demand that "the three great democracies, France, Great Britain, and the United States, co-operating with Russia", should direct their foreign policies against the Fascist powers, inferentially under the leadership of Monsieur Blum, "the greatest statesman in Europe today". Mr. Hamilton Fish Armstrong, directing genius of the Council on Foreign Relations, has attained best-seller circulation for his shrill opus, *We or They*, in which he echoes the Litvinoff nonsense of the ne-

cessity of an alliance of the "democracies" to repel Fascism. Dr. Stephen P. Duggan, Carnegie-endowed director of the Institute of International Education, which practically controls the contacts of our universities with European nations, throwing aside his supposed non-partisanship, has but recently gone upon a Caballero-supporting committee and has given his sponsorship to a bureau under the direction of his secretary to fight "Nazism" by attempting to provide jobs in American schools for Hitler's intellectual opponents. Bishops McConnell, Paddock, Blake, and other servants of the gentle Prince of Peace, forgetting the 13,400 Christian priests who have been butchered by Comrade Caballero in Spain, have joined forces with the Browderites to raise American money to assist Caballero in continued church-burning, "so necessary is it to defeat Fascism".

Even many Conservative elements, when they find themselves confronted with the issue of Germany and Italy, either maintain a discreet silence, or join openly with the Radicals. Miss Dorothy Thompson, whose seriousness as a European authority may be gauged by the fact that, just one year before the Nazis gained

power, she wrote that it had taken her exactly five-sixths of a second "to measure the startling insignificance of Hitler", enjoys the columns of the most influential Conservative newspaper in America to compose an almost daily hymn of hate against Germany. Mr. Avery Brundage, endeavoring as president of the American Olympic Committee to maintain the tradition of American sportsmanship by supporting the Olympic Games when they were held in a Fascist nation, drew down upon himself the most venomous campaign of abuse ever experienced by an American sportsman. Most incredible of all, the millionaire-trusteed Metropolitan Museum of Art resorts to a specious technicality to refuse the display of a priceless collection of German paintings which had been brought to this country by the Carl Schurz Foundation for the enrichment of American culture. It is difficult to reach any other conclusion than that the Russian intellectual pogrom against Fascism has frightened into acquiescence even the American plutocracy. In this fear to antagonize the pro-Russian clique, the Republic's short-sighted Conservative leaders lose sight of the vital fact that the unbefriended Fascists are at this moment occupying the

first-line world trenches in defense of the Conservative's own order.

In fairness to the American Fascist-haters, both Conservative and "Liberal", it must be recognized that their willingness to co-operate with Russia is inspired by a fervor for democracy or peace, rather than by a sympathy for Communism. It requires little searching of the records of the leaders of Communism, however, to realize that co-operation with Russia will bring neither democracy nor peace. It was Stalin himself, we are told by Jacques Doriot, once a member of the Communist International, who boasted to his Comintern associates when France stepped into the trap of Russian alliance, that the French treaty would eventually lead to the World War which would be the "prelude to world revolution". And the intended American part in this prelude was disclosed inadvertently by Comrade Browder in his debate on neutrality with Mr. Norman Thomas, when he declared that "should the Soviet Union be attacked by Germany and Japan, it would be treason to advocate neutrality for America. The revolutionists will have to insist that the United States enter the war on the side of the Soviet Union".

The hypocrisy of the whole pretense that peace, as the world understands the word, is the purpose of Communist alliances with the trusting pacifists, was pointedly revealed by Tovarich Dimitroff, President of the Comintern, in his article in the *New Masses* on May 26, 1936. He said:

The struggle for peace is the struggle against Fascism, against Capitalism, the struggle for the triumph of Socialism in the entire world. . . . The preservation of peace furthers the growth of the forces of the proletariat, the forces of revolution; it aids in healing the break in the ranks of the labor movement; it assists the proletariat in becoming the guiding class in the struggle of all laboring people against Capitalism; it cracks the foundations of the Capitalist structure; it hastens the victory of Socialism.

Nor can anyone be seriously impressed by the crocodile tears which the Russophiles are now shedding over "democracy", in view of the insolent words of Maxim Litvinoff in his Moscow speech of November 29, 1936. Abroad, Tovarich Litvinoff has made much capital among his "Liberal" satellites by his claim that Russia, unlike the detested Italy and Germany, is now set on a road which leads back to democracy. But speaking in Moscow, in the presence of his adulat-

ing fellow-Communists, Stalin's foreign commissar boasted that it was not Russia, but democracy, which was changing. He declared:

We are not flattered when we are told in connection with the draft constitution, that we are returning to the fold of European democracy. It would be more correct to say that we are taking the banner of democracy, the banner of liberty which is falling from the weak hands of the decrepit bourgeoisie, and are putting new, rich Soviet content into this conception.

The words are an enlightening revelation of the thinly-veiled contempt with which realistic Russia today exploits the befuddlement of its "decrepit" democratic dupes. Having used them for the triumph of Russia, can there be any question that Communism will speedily give them this reward of "Soviet content" in their democracy? To this fate, a blind "Liberalism" insistently presses. American vigilance, if it is not completely stultified by an effete sentimentality, will keep its gaze centered upon that thin and weakening line where the Rightist nations are waging their campaign to save Western civilization. Once again Genghis Khan is on the march from the steppes. The maligned Fascist nations are today Europe's primary bulwark against his new advance.

CORONATION CRAZY

By H. W. SEAMAN

"AMERICA," says a London newspaper headline, "is Coronation Crazy." There must be some truth in it: I receive a dozen letters a week from American friends, and seldom one without a mention of Royalty. But every morning of late, as I have emerged into daylight after climbing through the neck-hole of my shirt, I have been disturbed by the thought of the vast horde of Yankees who are coming over for the Coronation this month. It strikes me that I should be keenly embarrassed if one of the invaders caught me at my early morning task. The chances against being so observed are by no means negligible. If, as the newspapers say, those who have already booked passage number between 50,000 and 2,000,000, nothing short of compulsory billeting may suffice to accommodate them. I have no sanitary or aesthetic objection to sharing a room with one of them; but the prospect of his seeing me in the rabbit-skinning process of putting on or taking off an English shirt fills me with alarm.

It is as if this simple act makes me aware, each time I perform it, of the many differences which, in spite of films, books, newspapers, radio, the English Speaking Union, and other cultural links, still separate us from our Western brethren. I do not think, however, that many of my neighbors, here in England, are similarly upset. Quite 99 of 100 of them, I will be bound, put on their shirts in the manner of surplices every morning without a thought for those who, departing from the British norm, put on their shirts in the manner of coats. True, coat-shirts may be obtained in the United Kingdom, but, like whisk brooms, screen doors, bourbon whisky, sweet potatoes, and bridge-lamps, they are dear and hard to find; and the generality of the English cling as tenaciously to their swaddling, long-tailed chemises as Western senators to their string neckties. One reason for this conservatism is the high cost of innovation. It is only four or five years since the first shirt equipped with double neckband, to protect the

nape from the collar-button, appeared here. An expensive advertising campaign was needed to overcome popular resistance to the contraption, and a label, "stud pocket", was attached to each neckband in order to explain its purpose to the startled purchaser. To this day, thirty-five per cent of my neighbors are unconverted, and bear on their necks the dark stigmata of naked studs.

It is probably my long exposure to American ways that has made me sensitive to such variations. In an English railway station the girl in the information booth which is called the station-master's office (the station-master being an official who puts on a top-hat to welcome the Duke of Windsor or Marlene Dietrich), tells me that a train goes at three-five. "3.05," I write. "No," she says, "three-five."

"But isn't that what I have written?" I ask.

"It seems a funny way to write it," she replies. "You must be a foreigner."

I look up at the framed timetable on the wall, and sure enough it is 3.5, not 3.05. Every day something of that sort happens to me, an Englishman in England. I still find myself, in an English theater, groping under the seat for a hat-rack that is never there.

Since such differences still present daily problems to me, after all these years in England, how much greater, I ask myself, tucking my long shirt-flaps into my trousers and taking a reef in my braces, must be the difficulties of the millions of poor bewildered Yankees coming to these shores to share our joy in the Crowning of the King. What will they gather when the waitress, who has never heard of French-fried, says "Ta" for a sixpenny tip? What will they do with their genuine, imported, English walking sticks in a land where no man sound in limb has carried a stick since the War? How will they feel when they read in one issue of an English newspaper (1) that the chief reason for the decline of the viola as a solo instrument is that it cannot be mass-produced by Yankees, who know no music but jazz; (2) that an English magistrate, addressing a prisoner, said: "Stand up, you! Don't lounge. This is not an American court"; and (3) that four more Yankee tourists have been cleverly mulcted by smart English con men? And the language barrier — an American, asking his way to the nearest telephone booth, may be told to turn at the next *rowbows*, and he will find a *ky-osk* in front of a *ly-do*. I know of no dictionary

that will tell him that a robot is a traffic signal, a kiosk a 'phone booth, and a lido an amusement palace containing restaurant, dance hall, and swimming pool.

But it is not my purpose here to scare our guests away. On the contrary, let them all come, and the more the merrier say I; and so do the hoteliers and the restaurateurs and the dips and the coney-catchers and the profiteers in seats and window spaces along the route of the Coronation procession. The show is going to cost us £454,000, but, says the *Sunday Chronicle*, our visitors are expected to spend £6,000,000, including £2,000,000 on drinking the King's health on the great day. It is regarded as a dirty trick on the part of the French to open their Exposition in Paris eleven days before our big show. Throughout Europe this Summer the watchword will be: "All that the traffic will bear."

II

It seems only yesterday that Sam Dodsworth was among us, wondering uneasily whether his hat, guaranteed by the Hub Hatters in Zenith to be the smartest in America, was quite the thing for Piccadilly. Was it "slanted down in front with too rakish an air"? Possibly

it was at the time, but today he would find less occasion for embarrassment. Young England has gone to the gangster films for snappy hints, and hats that would bring their wearers under police scrutiny in New York are worn bravely by Englishmen of unimpeachable respectability. My own hatter, one of the old school, after fighting a last-ditch battle for years, has put in his window a large portrait of James Cagney wearing the latest in underworld millinery, with the inscription: "Say! This is the hat for you. The Big Shot!"

Nor need Dodsworth entertain any sartorial qualms even if he manages to crash the Coronation itself; though this would be an unlikely feat, since the Abbey, with eighteen inches of seat-space for each person, including the fattest Duchess in all her war paint, holds only 7500, at least two-thirds of whom will be behind pillars. If he turns up in a dress suit he may be taken for nothing more *outré* than a Socialist M.P., the members of H.M. loyal Opposition having decided to shun knee breeches and similar gauds. Nor will he have difficulty in making himself similarly comfortable at other functions of the social season: for, if by chance he is invited to

one of the Royal garden parties, he can stroll on the Buckingham Palace lawn in a hired morning coat, striped trousers, and topper, secure in the knowledge that some of his fellow guests have obtained theirs on the same terms. (I have an invitation — R., with the cash, S.V.P. — to one of the swellest affairs of the season, the Royal Caledonian Ball at Grosvenor House. On the obverse of the engraved card is a warning that decorations and orders must be worn, and that gentlemen in ordinary evening dress, without facings, will be refused admittance. On the reverse is the intimation, in small type, that colored facings may be hired in the vestibule for a dollar.

The notion that the social graces are cultivated more extensively and more expertly here than in America has no sounder foundation in fact than the notion that the lions in Trafalgar Square are superior in rank to the lions in front of the New York Public Library. My guess, after long and wide experiences of boarding houses and hotels on both sides of the Atlantic, is that there are actually fewer knife-swallowers in Zenith, Ohio, than in Nottingham, Notts. If the proportion of collar-and-sock-wearers in England has increased in the last couple of decades, then

the improvement is due to the ennobling influence of American films. When I was a boy, nobody ever dreamed of taking his hat off in an English cinema. It was not until Bill Hart had set the example a thousand times, by cleaving the ambient air with his five-gallon hat every time a white woman came in sight, that any English male below the rank of yard foreman took off his lid to his girl. Today, there is hardly a yeoman of England, who, clapping his eyes on a fair one for the first time, does not know enough to uncover, express in the four usual words his pleasure at the encounter, and beg to be forgiven for retaining his glove.

If Dodsworth, in transferring his fork to his right hand for the neater disposition of mashed potatoes, feels himself lorgnetted, he can get his own back. If he finds himself among the peers and peeresses for whom luncheon will be served on Coronation Day in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords at a flat rate of 10s.6d. a head, let him not fear that his Western ways will make him conspicuous. At this set-out the fiasco of one of the Jubilee luncheons may well be repeated: on that occasion, the catering arrangements slipped up, and hungry guests, reduced almost to eating their medals, fought like

dogs. Having more than once seen the British nobility in the act of feeding, I have no hesitation in reassuring Dodsworth. At the Grand National recently I saw the holder of one of our most revered titles, with a pork pie in one hand and a bottle in the other, taking alternate bites and swigs.

To begin to explain to Dodsworth just what a pork pie is would lead me far afield, among veal and ham pies, Bath chops, Bradenham hams, saveloys, and tripe and onions; and there would remain a book to be written about fish and chips. I would still have to make clear why the man at the coffee stall gaped when Dodsworth asked for so simple a snack as a Western sandwich. Because ten years ago, the word *sandwich*, anywhere in England, had only one meaning: ham. It was never ham on rye or ham on toast; it was plain bread, often without butter. Today there is a scattering of oases, called snack-bars, not lunchrooms, where such newfangled fare as ham-and-egg, anchovy, sardine, Manhattan, and Club sandwiches may be obtained. Edgar Wallace, dying in Hollywood, wrote home that he had discovered a wonderful sandwich, no less than one made from hot roast beef, with gravy on it. The news may have created a momentary

sensation, but had no lasting result.

The coffee at the House of Lords luncheon will probably be good. It is a mistake to suppose that good coffee is unobtainable in England. The prevalence of bad coffee is due to economic factors. As Dodsworth goes up and down this country (for he can hardly spend all his time watching Duchesses eat caviar for charity, or the Life Guards changing guard) he may suspect that some of the coffee, in inns and restaurants, and even in private houses, has been made in teapots; and he will be nearly right. A pound of coffee in England, and God knows why, costs more than a pound of tea, which is to say, at least three times as much as a pound of coffee costs in America. The English are thus naturally led to suppose that the same amount of coffee as tea, namely one teaspoonful to a cup, suffices to make a palatable beverage. At least half the coffee consumed in England is made from liquid essences, which from their taste and their effect on the system, appear to be mostly burned molasses. There can be little wonder, then, that at least 45,000,000 of the people of these islands actively prefer bad coffee to good. I have seen an Englishman, given real coffee for the first time, turn pale and rush to the sink.

III

If Dodsworth has not already made hotel reservations in London and has not planked down the money for a seat at a window (the average price is \$25, and there is a proposal to charge entertainment tax as well), let me invite him to spend Coronation Week in some such spot as the ancient cathedral city that I inhabit. We are going to have a whale of a do. The magistrates have been graciously disposed to grant us the boon of an extra hour for boozing, which means that the pubs will remain open until 11 P.M. "I don't think the privilege will be abused," said the Chief Constable, thereby confounding the disloyal devices of a couple of parsons and three lay preachers who had argued that such an extension of drinking hours would be the thin edge of a licentious wedge. Our festivities will be on a scale only less grand than those of the Metropolis. Ordnance will be discharged at the barracks, the streets will be festooned with red, white, and blue, a grand fete and gala will be held in the principal park, the Lord Mayor will wear his chain of office all day, his State coach will be brought out, and the fireworks in the evening will include two magnificent set-pieces

—authentic portraits of Their Majesties, many times life-sized.

The climax of the beano will be the public roasting of an ox in the market place. This has been debated for months. At first there were fears that it could not be brought off, organized lovers of the higher animals (not including snakes, mosquitoes, or rats) having protested that the spectacle would be revoltingly barbarous. The same wowsers who had the bull-fight sequence excised from a film, had Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* banned from the public library, and actually made their anti-vivisectionist brethren remove from the boardings a poster showing a dog in pain, because it hurt their feelings—these people declared that the very sight of an animal roasted whole instead of piecemeal would make them sick. Nevertheless, we are going ahead with the roasting.

I hope that Dodsworth, if he comes to the ox-party, will not be seriously incommoded if one of our heat waves is in full blast. The first usually arrives in May, and the newspapers salute it in headlines: "70 in Shade. Britain Swelters. Thousands Prostrated." And there ought to be a guidebook for the visitor. It would warn him that if he uses a seat in a park he must

pay 2d. for it, and retain the ticket for inspection. It would tell him that the London tube-trains stop running about midnight, and that the only means of waftage after that is the costly taxicab. And principally, it would tell him where to get a drink when all the places seem to be closed.

I wish I could help him in this last emergency. Three of the bottle clubs I knew a month ago were raided in the Coronation clean-up. I have just received, from the address of one of them, an engraved invitation to a private party, which, I am assured, is legal until the police find a way to stop it. That is to say, the party will go on night and day until cops, disguised as honest citizens, have had so much liquor there at the public expense that they think it is time to pinch the joint and go elsewhere. Dodsworth will have no difficulty in obtaining any number of similar invitations. All he has to do is stand on any Piccadilly Circus corner from midnight to 12.30. In that time he can acquire a pocketful of them, mostly delivered by hatless, sleek-haired young men in evening clothes, talking with the corners of their mouths. Thus he can cure in England all his nostalgia for the speakeasies of old. The only difference in this regard between

England after 11 P.M. and America from 1920 to 1933 is that the liquor dispensed here and now is dearer and much worse.

Another thing—the visitor must not assume that his life is so much safer here than at home that he can afford to take chances. Our official homicide rate is low, perhaps because when an unknown corpse is hauled out of the river it is assumed that the hole in the head was caused by accidental collision with a coal barge. But nearly twice as many people are killed by motor-cars daily in London as in New York. Still Dodsworth, having missed the last Tube train, can walk to his lodging with reasonable assurance that he will not be held up. But if he leaves his front door unlocked, as in Zenith, he will certainly lose his watch, and his pants with it. He must also overcome his habit of leaving parcels on top of the mail box for the postman to collect: they will be removed instantly, and if the thief is caught, Dodsworth will be held accountable. Only recently a magistrate gave a severe lecture to a newsie who left his stand for a while and relied on his customers to put down their pennies in his absence. The man who took the money was freed with a mild caution, but the newsie was given a

stern dressing-down for his un-English behavior in putting temptation in other people's way.

Dodsworth may have heard that this country has been so thoroughly Americanized that it is no longer worth visiting. That is a lie. We are still quaint. But, when you really come to think about it, so is Brooklyn.

IV

In the dozen letters that I receive weekly from American friends, some are good enough to express concern for the future of Royalty. I can reply only that it appears to be at least as safe as the Bank of England. A little while ago it really seemed that the King-game was up: republicanism raised its grisly head—but only to duck down again when someone asked: "Who for President? A Roosevelt? A Harding? A Coolidge? A Winston Churchill?" And the snorts against Royalty were to such little purpose that we are going to have the grandest, gaudiest Coronation in history, costing twice as much as any Coronation before it, and nearly as much as Sam Goldwyn has ever spent on an Epic. The loudest republican I know, the local atheist, who has never held with kings, is chairman and treas-

urer of the association of shopkeepers who are going to decorate our Main Street. He says he knows of nothing in the republican creed that requires him to reject an excuse for a binge.

Dodsworth need have no fear so long as he keeps out of the Royalty argument, lets off no republican cracks, stands up when the band plays *My Country*, *'Tis of Thee*, and refrains, at a formal dinner, from lighting his cigar before the Chairman has said, "Gentlemen, the King!" Some people embarrass their neighbors, after the loyal toast, by sighing deeply and murmuring, "God bless him", but it has recently been decided that they are bounders whose example should not be followed. There is nothing in the rules, however, that forbids Dodsworth to say, "What this country needs is a good fifteen-cent cigar."

As I write, I learn that newsreel men are going to be allowed to film the Coronation on condition that they submit their pictures to the Archbishop of Canterbury before the public gets a slant at them. Dodsworth may ask, "Does the Archbishop of Canterbury run this country?"

The answer is that at times, lately, it has looked bloody nearly like it.

SEXUAL FREEDOM TODAY

BY HAVELOCK ELLIS

TO SAY that the social attitude towards sex has changed is a truism. At innumerable points we feel and think and act today, where some aspects of sex are concerned, differently from the people of fifty years ago whom we call "Victorians", though they were far from being conscious of the creed we are now pleased to attribute to them. For the younger generation the difference is not easy to realize; but those of us who are old enough to have been in touch with more than one generation are better able to appreciate the changes which have taken place.

If I speak for myself, I can say that in my early youth sex had on the surface no existence. In a happy home life it never came into question. There was no prudish repression; there seemed nothing to repress. There was never a word of information or guidance, and seemingly no need for it. I recall, indeed, that once as a small boy, poring over a phrenological chart in an old book, I came upon an area marked "Organ of Amative-

ness", and asked an old lady in the room (who had spent her earlier life as a teacher) what that meant. She put aside my innocent question as improper. I felt snubbed, and never again asked anyone a similar question. But my curiosities became intensified. I might indeed say that I have spent much of my life trying to reach the answer to my own childish question, breaking through various barriers on the way.

At school, a middle-class private school frequented by the sons of professional men, the atmosphere was much the same as at home. Of course, sex was never approached, openly or privately, by any master, and among the boys themselves it never came up for discussion. Some might cherish a private attraction to a girl, but if such subjects were ever touched on it was lightly and playfully. Of masturbation I never once heard. I sought in books to satisfy my desire for knowledge, and at an early stage discovered that babies are not born, as I had previously supposed,

through the navel. But the further I extended my search among books the more deeply dissatisfied I became. They were all superficial, or goody-goody, or cranky, when not, as indeed frequently happened, mischievous. Even if I had been able to extend my investigation more widely among scientific books, I should have found no reason to modify my conclusion. Those were days when it was possible for manuals of physiology to be put out, even by eminent hands, with the reproductive system completely ignored; when the psychology of sex had no existence at all; and the art of love was only known as an improper subject once written about by Ovid. I was still a youth when, sixty years ago, I made the resolution that a main part of my work in life would be the exploration of this subject, so that it should never be necessary for the youth of succeeding generations to experience the difficulties I had experienced in obtaining enlightenment on a matter so vitally important.

There will never be occasion for anyone to make such a resolution again. It is no longer the lack of literature on the subject of sex which we have occasion to lament, but more probably its excess. Still, many of the books are good, and

we have cause to be thankful that by a reasonable amount of seeking they may be found, in spite of the obstacles still often put in the way. But while the literature of information and of guidance is much, it is not everything. Practice lingers behind theory. Books affect social life, but that life takes a course of its own, and we have to view it independently of such influences. So viewed, there is still change to be noted.

We commonly hold that this change is a matter of sex taboos, and that there has been a revolutionary removal of taboos imposed by "Victorianism". That is a superficial statement of the matter. Moreover, it is far from true that taboos on sex manifestations are so recent, or that we deserve special credit for abolishing them. They have been formed and abolished as far back as our knowledge extends, and, without doubt, still further back in prehistoric days. Even among some supposedly "primitive" peoples of today, there are, as among ourselves, indecent words which no respectable savage uses, and these, we may be sure, change from age to age. In English literature we may trace the changing conventions and taboos of speech where sex is concerned. Chaucer could use simple old English

words, though, as he himself admitted, he was rather worried over the protests of the "precious folk". In France, in the seventeenth century, we find the same hyper-refined *précieuses* dominating speech. Tallemant des Réaux regrets that the good simple old word *cul* could no longer be used in respectable society.

There is action and reaction in this matter, the imposition of taboos and their abolition. It was one of the few beneficial influences of the World War that it aided in the removal of various sex taboos which would otherwise have taken place more slowly. There is now a general tendency toward freedom in our social speech and even in our literature. Putting aside the daring products in the by-ways of literature which many would consider abnormal, even the recognized masters in English literature today exercise a new freedom. Thus Mr. Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza*, which, so far as my limited knowledge goes, is perhaps the most significant English novel since the Great War, displays a freedom in using words which the great novelist of half a century ago, a Meredith or a Hardy, would never have dared approach.

Thus we begin to face all the relations of sex in a more direct and

less ashamed spirit. No doubt — and I am far from wishing to deny it — that spirit may be traced back to the pioneering individual investigators who first explored this field and set forth the results in books. But as individuals their influence was small; they were even liable to be legally suppressed. It was only when the results were transformed into socialized practice, into relatively generalized modes of feeling and acting, that they became effective. There were two notable features of this socialized development in the field of sex: it specially affected women; and it brought us to comprehend the value of sexual education.

II

It was inevitable that the sexual status of women should specially tend to be modified, since it was around women that the old system was built up. The ancient and, at its origin, exclusively masculine quality of "virtue" had been quaintly transformed into an exclusively feminine and sexual quality. Not only moral laws, but also social conventions, had been elaborately and rigidly constructed around this absurdly disguised "virtue". No doubt there were superficial national degrees in the

rigidity of convention, and I recall that when in early years my sister crossed the Channel to join me for a time at a Paris hotel, Remy de Gourmont remarked that that would be impossible for a French girl. But beneath superficial national variations, the underlying attitude was the same. Today, women, including those of high character and ability, frequently exercise a degree of freedom which could never have even seemed possible to my early contemporaries.

Not long since, Dr. Ira Wile, in the valuable *Journal of Social Hygiene*, set down his impressions, as an experienced observer during many years, of the generation of today. The most profound change, he found, is that which affects the sexual status of women. They have developed into human beings in general respects on the same level as men, and this has inevitably led to a new attitude towards the former masculinization of all sexual ideas. They have their own ideas concerning sex and comradeship, and do not hesitate to contemplate a companionate marriage. They are conscious of being on a higher educational level, and able to formulate their own rights and privileges. If the new standard of morality involves freedom of sexual expression, that freedom holds

equally for girls. This tendency may sometimes be pushed to extremes which even on the masculine side are generally regarded as undesirable. But while, for instance, petting with its freedoms has increased, and mutual handling is no longer supposed to be unholy and unclean, we have no good grounds for believing that greater evils are produced than were formerly liable to occur. There is a new liberation of the female spirit today, and a new feminine aggressiveness, but the accompanying greater awareness involves an increased power of self-protection, whether on the technical side with contraceptive arts or on the mental side with the realization of tensions and repressions and their significance. Venereal disease diminishes, houses of prostitution lose their appeal, and if intimate private liaisons are formed, they are on the footing of mutual interest and even with references to a monogamic basis. Promiscuity is dying out.

The practice of masturbation is indeed sometimes thought to have increased, but the most careful of earlier statistics show that it has always been very common. Now, being based on a regulated release of emotional tension, it need no longer be viewed as a secret vice.

I have in the main been following Dr. Wile's diagnosis of the situation today in America. But it fairly represents what is happening in England and must happen everywhere as an enlightened outlook spreads. The conclusion which Dr. G. V. Hamilton reached on the basis of his investigation of high-class married people in New York—that men are becoming more chaste and women less chaste—is doubtless of general application, and, in relation to former conditions, it is a wholesome tendency. No doubt this enlightenment takes on forms that are sometimes crude, extravagant, and even mischievous. Those of an older generation who hear that “woman now smokes, drinks, travels alone, swears, gambles, swaps colorful stories, and imitates Old Adam” do not always feel that that is evidence of a better world, but are apt to remember that there are natural differences in the sexes, physical and presumably psychic, which involve natural differences in tastes, and that the “Old Adam” is not always a worthy object for imitation. But it is inevitable that in periods of transition, reactions should sometimes be extreme. They do not lead us to expect any fundamental change in those standard forms of marriage which have always pre-

vailed in our world. I am in entire agreement with the conclusion of Dr. Westermarck in his recent judicial work,¹ that what we may reasonably expect is that “people will be less tied by conventional rules and more willing to judge each case on its merits, and that they will recognize greater freedom for men and women to mold their own amatory life”.

One such extreme reaction is that from the old attitude of secretive mystery surrounding a terrifying and disgusting impulse to the assertion that we are merely concerned with a commonplace animal function. Thus some teach that the sexual function should be treated as on the same level as the excretory function. It is enough, we are told, to ask: Is it natural? And to accept what is regarded as the obvious answer. Now, it is very desirable that from the earliest age the child should be taught that there is nothing disgusting or shameful in excretory functions. This is important on account of the proximity of the excretory to the genital center. If the excretory organs are viewed as despicable, the same view will only too easily be extended to the genital center with which they are closely associated.

¹ *Short History of Marriage*, by Edward A. Westermarck. Macmillan: New York.

But the question is not settled by saying that excretory functions and sexual functions are both physiological and natural. There are essential respects in which they profoundly differ. Physiological functions in general work independently of any outside individual. To fulfil in a normal manner the function of sex, the co-operation of another individual is needed. Moreover, that co-operation has to be of a peculiarly private and intimate nature since it involves the penetration of the body. There is still a further character of the first importance which marks off the function of sex. It not only concerns another living person; it also concerns, when completely fulfilled, the generation yet unborn to whom it will give life. In that sexual act two persons achieve that supreme creative act which mankind has commonly ascribed to deity. We scarcely know exactly how primitive peoples reached that attitude of awe before the function of sex, of mixed horror and fascination, which we nearly everywhere find in savage cultures. But we may see good reason why they should regard it as constituting a sphere remote from ordinary physiological functions. And the attitude is so widespread that we may fairly consider it much more "nat-

ural" than that of matter-of-fact acceptance.

III

The conflict of sexual expression and repression is well illustrated by the everlasting difficulty of marriage, which is the social center of sex. Marriage may properly be regarded as normally a state of tension (indeed, as Keyserling remarks in this connection, without tightened strings there is no music), and there is no prospect of the abolition of marriage. It exists, in one form or another, among the lowest races and the most advanced communities. Yet marriage has always been difficult. It perpetually involves trouble among savages. It does the same among ourselves. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Dorothy Osborne wrote that it was a miracle if two couples in ten lived in agreement. Today it is said that not more than one marriage in four is happy. What can we do about it?

In common with many who have played a pioneering part in sex enlightenment, I have usually said that there is first of all one chief remedy: education. I say so still, but I recognize that there is much room for criticism of that answer. In the first place we may

ask who is to impart the education. It is the mother whom I regard as the first and most influential guide to her child. But the vast body of mothers today are still so embarrassed by their own early initiation or lack of initiation into sex knowledge that they feel unable to say anything to their children.

It is useless to turn from the mothers to the elementary school-teachers. These are for a large part young women working under a State system which has never so much as heard of sex-enlightenment in education, and they have been brought up in a cloistered concentration on intellectual subjects which has often even suppressed their own sex impulses. Exceptions there are, but these run the risk of being squashed by their superiors. The solution which has suggested itself is the establishment, with or without State aid, of special methods of sex education at the later school age, which may often be too late. This course has of recent years been vigorously pursued in America. "Complete sex education for our children is an absolute necessity," said Judge Jeanette Brill of New York. "Parents have been given a fair trial, and have, for the most part, failed utterly." With the result, she adds, that the tragic victims of sex ig-

norance are brought into the Juvenile Courts every day.

She finds the only hope in the schools, recommending in every high school a male or female physician entrusted with this delicate task, and she states that in Philadelphia, where a year's course of sex enlightenment — there termed "health education" — is compulsory, it has had remarkably good results. A large number of schools, colleges, and other institutions in the United States have set up various kinds of courses for sex education.

The New York *Journal of Social Hygiene*, chief organ for all movements of this kind, has set forth "Points for Parents to Remember", and the most vital of these is the last: "Do you realize that, however useful talks from teachers or books written by experts be, your child's attitude to sex will be based on your own?" But if the children's attitude is determined by the ignorant attitude of their own parents, the vicious circle is complete.

Fortunately, that circle is here and there today broken. I find, and in various parts of the world, what I call the "New Mother". Quite often she has been formed by the realization of what was evil in her own upbringing. Lately a

schoolboy correspondent (aged fifteen) near London wrote to me:

I was brought up perhaps a little unusually, a fact for which I have ever been thankful. My mother wished me to think things out entirely for myself. She never made any mystery to me about sex, so that I looked upon it as a perfectly natural function, instead of only learning about it at a later age and having to see it through a haze of mystery and bigotry. I was brought up to no particular religion and any question I asked my mother, she answered as best she could, or frankly admitted she didn't know and helped me to look it up somewhere. I feel that it is such a pity more parents do not act in that way.

That mother was evidently one of my "New Mothers", and a chief hope for the world lies in their multiplication. Dr. Hamilton speaks of the "terrible mothers" — of the mother who tells a girl, from infancy on, that her father is an unworthy person, and the mother who unwittingly tries to find in her son the satisfaction of love-hunger her inhibitions will not permit her to seek in her husband. Hamilton is compelled to add: "This girl's name is legion and so is the boy's." It is such parents who are responsible for the complexes we so often hear about. But as Adler has recently remarked, "no child brought up under normal and harmonious conditions will develop into an Oedipus or an

Electra". The children brought up under morbid or stultifying impulses become unable, even when adult, to think and act for themselves. An adult correspondent, this time American, writes:

Here are thousands, even millions of marriageable young people who, from unemployment or low income, find it impossible to marry. What, I would like to ask you, is the best course for such to follow?

No single answer can be given to such a question. But we ought to be able to feel that young people, sensibly brought-up, and living in a sympathetic social environment, can think out a decision for themselves and act accordingly.

"Social environment" and its education cannot be left out of account. That is why the problem is so wide and any progress necessarily slow. It is not merely on individuals, but on our traditions, that we have to work. We cannot assert that the difficulties surrounding the sexual impulse are merely social and are to be removed by even the most extensive social change. They are ultimately, in the wide sense, biological, that is to say, anatomical, physiological, biochemical, and psychological. But we must learn to avoid rendering the natural difficulties insuperable by maintaining rigid, out-worn, and antipathetic social conditions.

HOW TO PICK A BEST-SELLER

BY A PUBLISHER

FOR three years I have been an editor in one of the largest New York publishing houses; and for three years I have been cross-questioned about the book business by old schoolmates and bridge partners, neighbors, relatives, and strangers. Just how, they invariably ask, does a publisher select his books, anyway?

The answer is a lengthy one, and I can best make it clear by describing the entire routine of an editorial department. Our office is typical. The day a manuscript arrives, it is "entered": the girl whose special job this is unwraps it, searches the files for any correspondence which may have preceded it, and fastens to the ms. a blue sheet labeled *Editorial Report Form*. At the top of this is printed

Author:

Submitted by (name, address):

Title:

Description of Manuscript (size, color):

Special Instructions:

Recommended by or Secured through:

The spaces are filled in and the manuscript, with its report form,

goes to our first reader. In case you are curious, *Special Instructions* is followed by some such comment as *Author is nice old man, send kind letter if rejecting*; or *Discuss at editorial meeting before deciding*; or *Rush, author sailing for Europe next week*. The notation *Recommended by* or *Secured through* is followed by the name of the editor, writer, friend, or friend of a friend responsible for the submission of the book; or the word *Agent*, which covers everything from room-mate to professional literary bureaus handling thousands of books; or the word *Un-sponsored*. Un-sponsored manuscripts in our organization receive as careful attention as all others: we don't want to risk turning down a *Gone With the Wind*. Yet do we ever reject mss. that are subsequently published elsewhere? Yes, about a hundred each year; and three or four of these will sell widely.

After the first reader has looked over the manuscript, and set down what he thinks of it, it is read by

one other person; and, if it's a bad book, or obviously unsuited to our house, it is then rejected. If, on the other hand, it appears promising, one or two, or as many as half a dozen persons read it.

I have gone through our files and selected a representative batch of reports, just as they were written by readers in the office. They show graphically the technique of sifting good books from bad, and the reactions of an editor when he thinks he has come upon a best-seller. Typical reports from two readers on the poorest manuscripts:

1. Aviator crashes on tropical island, discovers mysterious white princess. "His lips found hers" style.

2. Not for us; or anyone else I guess.

1. Story of a vaudeville trouper. I'm usually a sucker for anything with a theatrical background, but this novel just hasn't the stuff. Gray monotonous writing.

2. Long and rambling. Book peters out completely halfway through. The style is dreary, the characterization conventional, the plot schoolgirl-ish.

1. Second-rate verse. The author says it will be pushed by the XYZ Syndicate. But poor material, no matter how strongly pushed, won't be successful.

2. Uninspired poetry of the I-can-not-bear-so-much-beauty school. I found it rather embarrassing. Not for us.

1. This material consists of photographic studies of the naked Miss —, who submits it. Nothing we could do with it.

2. See absolutely nothing here except Miss —.

1. Poorly written reminiscences of an Alaskan childhood. Author is wife of vice-president of —, so we might let her down gently (she is calling Tuesday for the verdict).

2. Right. Let her down like a feather.

1. The author thinks that this will be another *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. She is wrong.

2. Out with it.

The authors of such books receive printed rejection slips. If a writer is a friend of someone, a brief note may be sent instead, but this does not alter the routine.

II

Group Two includes reports on books a shade better:

1. A fantasy. After the novelty of the idea has worn off — in about 25 pages — the reader loses interest. I don't object to the fantasy; one of my favorite novels is de la Mare's *Memoirs of a Midget*. But I do object to the fact that what should be a beautifully airy tale is told in flat-footed prose crammed with clichés. The end, too, is straight sentimentality, 1890 vintage.

2. This just doesn't wash. Sorry, because the author is a charming gal with a splendid figure.

1. An upper-class French girl marries a wealthy Japanese. This is the

story of her life in a remote Jap village. There was a chance here for a *House of Exile* sort of book. Unfortunately, the author can't write. I'm afraid it's unpublishable.

2. Very disappointing. Title good, material wonderful, but tone coy and self-satisfied.

1. There's a strange, fantastic, Blake-like talent here; but the book is impossibly difficult to read. A small group might like it—it would never sell to the public.

2. This isn't my kind of book and I do not believe it is a book for many other people, either. Its strange style, perverse psychology, and remoteness from ordinary emotions would kill it. The author may be a genius, but not our sort of genius.

1. A morbid Dostoevskian self-analysis of a woman's soul, which she describes and talks about as if it were her body. I am convinced from this book, as from other Russian novels, that Russian women make the second-worst bedmates in the world.

2. Out.

1. Farm story, obviously autobiographical. Pretty much on a dead level. Possibly publishable; wouldn't sell.

2. This business about how we fed the hogs is dull. I say out.

We send individual rejection letters to the writers of such manuscripts. A typical one:

Dear Mr. Smith,

Cinderella is a well-written story, and I wish we could publish it. I'm sorry to say, however, that we feel it would appeal to only a limited audience. It is possible that we are wrong and that another house will bring it

out successfully. You might try the Jones-Smith Company, and good luck.

Group Three includes mss. almost publishable. These reports are usually more detailed:

1. Half-a-dozen persons of mixed nationality are thrown together on ship-board. The writer has a light, deft touch and almost succeeds in doing the sort of thing that Sylvia Townsend Warner did so well in *Mr. Fortune's Maggot*. Here, however, the strokes in the picture are too faint; there is too little sketched in. . . . I have never heard of the author, but I suspect that she is very young. She should bear watching.

2. Not unamusing, but very slight. Wouldn't stand much chance.

1. This book has many virtues, but I am afraid salability is not one of them. The author admits frankly in an accompanying letter that his book is as unorganized and chaotic as life: I nourish the old-fashioned idea that a book, or any other work of art, should represent planning and organization. My vote is No, but other readers should examine.

2. For all its merits, I cannot imagine this book's selling more than 1000.

3. This novel is addressed to the emotions and sensibility rather than the understanding (though any really good book is addressed to all three). Its aim is to give the reader "a new emotional experience"; and this it accomplishes. Undoubtedly, it would attract critical attention if published; but it is bound to have a small sale.

1. A quick-moving murder story, crammed with horrors, written in a faintly amateurish way.

2. Unconvincing to me.
3. Just not good enough.

1. Here is the *Once In a Lifetime* of department stores. I don't like the title, the third act sags a little, but on the whole the play has the hilarity and pace that should make it go. I'm all for it.

2. I don't agree. *Once In a Lifetime* was funny; there isn't a thing here at which to laugh, and the play is neither well enough written nor well enough constructed to go. I suppose a couple of theatrical craftsmen could make it into a producible comedy, but it wouldn't be worthwhile as a book unless it had a real success on the stage—it's not good enough just as reading matter.

3. This is not the worst play I have ever read—it is next to the worst. If it were presented anywhere, even in New Florence, Iowa, it would fold up before the last act.

4. Agree with last report.

To the authors of such books we send slightly longer letters, embodying specific criticism, expressing willingness to reconsider the ms. if it is rewritten, and asking to see the writer's next book.

Group Four includes reports on manuscripts sufficiently promising to be considered by our whole staff, which meets once a week, and discusses such books as these:

1. An unusually good juvenile. Full of satire; and full, too, of adventures children will like. The horse psychology is excellent. I enjoyed the whole thing.

2. I am a pushover for whimsy when it is really good, and this seems

to be almost very good. The adventures of the horse are not in themselves terribly amusing or exciting, but the accompanying humor is so delightful that one finds oneself in a soft chuckle all through the book.

3. This has the makings of a fine juvenile. It's a story that any child would love; it has enough action and conversation; and, more important, it is so charmingly written that adults will buy it for their children. As to our publishing the script, I don't know. There's no angle we could promote in any special way; it is just a very amusing little story.

4. I'm sorry, but I'm for turning down this book. It is charming, and has a great deal of humor. But to my mind it is neither an adult's nor a child's book.

1. This is the anonymous autobiography of a man of letters. He was, of course, a dreamy child. (I'd like to see one such book beginning: "As a child I had adenoids and no imagination.") He grows up and goes to Harvard. He marries, lives happily, but feels today that he has not been true to his potentialities, has sold his birthright. It isn't a bad book. The main objection is that the reader feels the author, though he could doubtless have been a greater man than he was, couldn't have been as much greater as he seems to think. It is a sour book, somehow, without enough to be sour about.

2. Discursive autobiography in the form of reminiscences. Both man and writing seem to me too ordinary to attract many readers, but perhaps we should discuss at editorial meeting.

3. Check.

1. Recollections of an old sailing captain. I have a weakness for salt water in any form except gargles, so perhaps my enthusiasm ought to be

discounted; but I think there is a good deal here. The style, of course, leaves a lot to be desired. There are exciting facts, but the captain's sense of narrative is deficient: he doesn't build up his stories properly, or supply enough details; sometimes he lapses into too-technical terms. If we wanted to expend the time and energy, it could be worked into an exciting biography.

2. Excellent material, unsuccessfully handled. At first the unpretentious declarative sentences, incorporating all manner of romantic and exciting adventures, seem attractive; but the style soon grows monotonous, and eventually unreadable.

3. The material has possibilities, but that is all. There are so many characters of this sort all over the world that I don't regard the script as unique. I think we shouldn't accept anything like this unless it is extremely well written, so my vote is an unqualified negative.

Manuscripts like those described above may be accepted or rejected. If rejected, they probably will be snapped up by other publishers, and may even be made into best-sellers. You can't tell beforehand.

For example, here are some opinions of a book rejected by my house and now in its fifth printing with a rival firm:

1. Transcription of the actual scribbled diary kept by an old-time Indian fighter. The stuff is authentic. Nevertheless, I vote No without any hesitation except that my judgment may be bad. I can detect no central theme, and in its present shape the manuscript is almost hopelessly confused.

2. I think there's a chance here for a real success. Reasons: (a) The author has had a whale of an exciting life. (b) His naïve and ingenuous approach brings out the drama in sharp relief. (c) Both children and adults will enjoy the book.

3. I do not think there's a chance here for a success. In fact, I disagree with report No. 2 on practically every point. I've read other biographies like this; the approach seems to me pedestrian, and the text may be interesting to children, but I can affirm that it is wearying for an adult after a few pages. I don't think the book would sell 1000 copies.

4. I'd bet a large amount of money that a ghost writer did this. It just doesn't ring true at all, in psychology or in style. It seems to me the sort of thing adults might suppose would interest children — theoretically, perhaps, it should — but I feel convinced it wouldn't.

5. I was against this from the beginning, and the vote is overwhelmingly adverse.

And here are some of our reports on a book rejected by ten other houses before we saw and accepted it:

1. The first paragraph of this story is the best opening paragraph I have ever read. Better even than the opening of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, and rather like it in effect. Pages 1 to 40 are so good that I felt we had come across a genius; but thereafter the book becomes one intense conversation after another, with very little action until the end. If the script were cut, and rigidly revised, it would undoubtedly find a public. It has some of the brutality of Faulkner, the aristocratic sadism of Fitz-

gerald, and in addition a hint, but a genuine hint, of the deep fierce sexuality of D. H. Lawrence. It is well worth working over, if the author is a reasonable youth.

2. I am sure this book would hold anyone's attention. I found it gripping. It is far from being a complete or well-rounded novel; but it is certainly out of the ordinary. It needs both cutting and rearrangement.

3. This sort of thing can be very effective (in a small dose) or terrible. I had had enough by page 50; but I think the book would sell.

4. I am not for taking this novel, though I think the author should be watched carefully. He may do something superb next time. This script as it stands is too tenuous. It could do with a great deal of cutting and revision; then it might be salable.

5. This is excellent. Probably one of the most intense things I've ever read. I think we should work out a series of revision suggestions.

After heated discussions, we decided we wanted the novel. And here are examples of our notes to the author:

CHAPTER I

Specific Criticisms

Page	Line	
1	6	"amused at his derision" — not derision, really; why amused, anyway?
2	4	"the boy"? Not clear; patch up transition
2	15	"weakness in self-discipline". Please elaborate; confusing as it stands
4	19	Would omit marked sentence; it weakens paragraph
7	8-12	Doesn't he keep any liquor in the house?

14 II Repetitious (see page 3,
remark about Jimmy)

CHAPTER I

General Comment

A little too much editorializing; the reader grows conscious of the erection of framework for your story. Doesn't all this come out later on, anyway? . . . The time element is not wholly clear, the "nows"; it would help if somewhere you stated just how long ago all this happened. . . . I have ventured to insert the minimum of commas; without them, sentences are sometimes incoherent. . . . The chapter, on the whole, is good: the conflict clear (the man and woman strike us in the face). But the edge is blunted by an excess of conversation, beginning top of page 13 — to end of chapter. These seven pages of dialogue should be sharpened to about five. . . .

And so on, straight through the book, forty-five typed pages of concrete revision suggestions which the author accepted in a remarkably co-operative way. Result? A novel which sold 34,000 copies and established a literary reputation of real importance.

III

Finally we come to the kind of book which rouses jaded editors to exclamation points and cries for immediate editorial conferences. The novel described below was published three years ago, sold 80,000 copies, and is still selling.

1. This book has everything! I mean everything: glamor, romance, brilliant writing, a central character of tremendous personality, a marvelous background, and a supremely tragic central story. It is a wonderful human document, touching life at a hundred points, and making an appeal which, in my opinion, is irresistible. I think we should sign up the author *at once*.

2. I've just read the first six chapters. No. 1 is right—the story is written brilliantly, and has authentic characterization, three-dimensional atmosphere, and a breathtaking emotional quality. Congratulations on spotting it. Let's publish it and do a spectacular job.

For comparison I append reports on a book which aroused as much enthusiasm as the preceding one—but an enthusiasm tempered by the prophecy that it would not sell:

1. *This is a beautiful, beautiful book.* It has the radiant quality of a Spring day in an orchard. The style is exquisitely fitted to the story. The author's similes are apt and lovely, classical and graphic. The language is simple and precise. There is humor. There is understanding of the lives of many persons. *But* I don't see how the book can sell well. It's not a novel; it's a study. There is no action worth mentioning. The setting is remote. The characters are peculiar.

2. I like this enormously. But I'm afraid that it is just for dreamy-eyed goofs in editorial departments, and not for the strident masses.

3. This is the real thing. Only our grandchildren, I suppose, can tell whether it is a heritage for posterity,

but the reading of it gave me a thrill greater than I have received from many solemnly respectable classics. It is filled with that remembrance of things past which is the foundation of much of the world's great literature. The story, of course, can have only a limited audience at best, but it may find some few enthusiastic supporters who could help push its sale. It is a slight but glorious book.

4. I check completely with the other enthusiastic reports: a beautiful piece of simplified Proust.

5. I shan't wax ecstatic in this report. I understand that other reactions make this unnecessary. I can't help saying, however, that the book is like a beam of light projected back into the misty scenes of one's childhood—that it possesses, besides a prose-poetry limpidity of style, a special power of evocation which is so valid that the reader wonders whether a good deal of the author's infancy wasn't spent jotting down little notes for the book on his bib.

We published the book and the Cassandras were right. It sold only 600 copies. But we had accepted it with eyes open to its gloomy prospects, and had no regrets.

Exactly what chance of acceptance has a manuscript sent to our editorial office? We receive between 3000 and 4000 manuscripts annually. Of these, we actually publish thirty to forty-five—or just about one in each hundred submitted. Not a large proportion; but it never seems to discourage the other ninety-nine writers.

THE DAY

BY ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

NOT a cloud was seen,
The sun stood high,
Upon the hearthstone
Crackled a flame,
The old woman brought
Biscuits and wine
And waited long.
But no one came.

She went to the door,
To look down the road,
But never the sound
Of a coach was heard,
A hazel branch
Brushed against the wall
And there was the song
Of a Summer bird.

All day she waited,
All evening she watched,
When the clock struck twelve
She went to bed.
"The day of the bond
Has come and gone, —
The Devil was busy,"
Slowly she said.

Once more she dared
To murmur a prayer,
Thin hands folded
Upon thin breast,
Greatly relieved
But a little put out
At the obvious lack
Of interest.

HAPPY ENDING

A Story

BY WHITFIELD COOK

DORA PRANN first met Roger when he came to bury her father. He was masterful and efficient and sympathetic and, contrary to her ideas about undertakers, a little fat. But he was tall enough to carry his weight well; he made a good appearance. In between her periods of grief, Dora was quite impressed, especially when she learned he was the successful owner of the Fairchild Funeral Parlor that occupied the large white house with the cupola on Morris Avenue.

Not that it was hard to impress Dora. Anything in pants could do it. That hadn't always been so, but now she was twenty-nine and a little desperate and hurt about the way fate and her mother had managed to discourage any young man who had ever been interested in her. There had been Tommy Fields; but her mother said he had no ambition and that in five years he'd still be selling stockings on commission. Well, it had been

eight years; and he still was. Then there'd been Frank Greer. Her mother said he was absolutely no good, which had been proven later when he married another girl and left her flat. With a baby, too. Dora's mother had always been right. And yet, at twenty-nine, Dora wondered if having a husband, any husband, no matter for how short a time, wasn't better than having none.

Sometimes Dora would have long crying spells, because she wasn't dashing and beautiful; and then her mother, after dosing her with aromatic spirits of ammonia, would say: "You may not be flashy, Dora, but you have a subtle personality. That's what counts." But, nevertheless, Dora did regret her completely neutral face. She felt she'd drawn a blank. And she was right. In a crowd you'd never notice her. Even in a small crowd you'd never notice her. As for her subtle personality, all it had ever gotten her was a

job as substitute teacher in the elementary grades of the public schools. And she hated the work; every day she prayed that she wouldn't be called, even though it meant a few more welcome dollars. She'd rather do without spending money than have to endure six hours a day facing a gang of fiendish young hoodlums. When she took over a class for a few days or a week, the children looked on it as a welcome holiday. They pulled their most mischievous tricks and made her miserable. She hated them; and secretly she feared them with a sickening fear that gripped her stomach. She felt they intuitively understood her unhappiness; once she had found a crumpled scrap of paper with the jingle:

*Poor old Miss Prann
She ain't got a man.*

When she'd been teaching for a while and was finally released from the ordeal, she'd have a collapse. She'd stay in bed a few days; and her mother would flutter around her with omelets and custards and say: "It's just a shame the way that teaching tires you all out. You shouldn't have to do it." No, she shouldn't, thought Dora. She was obviously the type to

be spoiled and pampered and waited on. "If ever there was a girl meant for great wealth," Mrs. Prann would say, "it's Dora." Dora agreed. She could close her eyes and positively feel herself wrapped in a feathered negligee, lounging on a sumptuous French bed. She loved beds. Even her own big old walnut bed that sagged in the middle. She could lie in it in a dozing state and indulge in little flights of fancy in which she was discovered like Cinderella in her suburb by her latest movie crush, who snatched her from the bosom of her family, flew with her by fast plane to his California mansion, and made passionate love to her on a bear rug. Often in the morning, even when she wasn't having a collapse, she'd get thinking things like that. And she'd fight against the idea of getting up and seeing her father drooling his cereal. So she'd call downstairs in a weary voice: "I have an awful headache, Mother. I think I'll stay in bed." "Oh, you poor dear," Mrs. Prann would say, "don't you stir. I'll bring you a little snack after I've got your father off." And then Dora would flop back into bed with delicious laziness and let dozens of superb specimens of manhood make love to her all at once. It was better than going down-

stairs and having to kiss Father goodbye when he left for the 8:15. Father smelled so strongly antiseptic in the morning. Though by evening it was worse when the antiseptics and lotions had worn away, and he just smelled of stale tobacco and fetid breath. And death. Father always smelled of death.

Mr. Prann had been dying for years. Just as the stair-carpet had been wearing thinner and thinner and the enamel had been chipping off the sink. It wasn't painful; and to Mrs. Prann it was maddeningly undramatic. He'd just been getting less and less alive, his body becoming less and less of a good instrument. He had none of his own teeth now. He could see with only one eye. He'd had a slight stroke and didn't walk well. He couldn't exercise much because of his heart. He could digest certain foods, but those only with the aid of rumbling acid belches, which he'd grown rather fond of and which his wife and daughter politely ignored. But in spite of his infirmities, he still went to New York every day and earned his small salary with his old-fashioned brokerage firm. And every evening he came home, walked three blocks from the station, and, with English, Spanish, and modernistic

homes right and left of him, smiled his satisfaction with his own faded gray house surrounded by too many trees and not enough grass. And then he'd go inside, where he knew Mrs. Prann was already making preparations for his death. He could be tolerant of this. He knew she didn't really wish to speed her departing husband. It was just that there had been so few events in her life, she had to make the most of this one.

II

Mrs. Prann went out very little. Aside from the fact that she couldn't afford the little expenses of being entertained and entertaining in return, she had two front teeth missing. She was self-conscious about it and tried to keep her lip over the gap when talking. This gradually had given her the most extraordinary, strained expression which suggested she was about to be violently sick to her stomach. Naturally this did not promote popularity. And since she was really ill-at-ease except with people with whom she could relax, she was quite content to limit her social contacts to grocers, butchers, laundrymen, and the like. And, of course, she had Dora and Percy. And planning the life

of the former and the death of the latter was enough for her.

So let her have her fun was Mr. Prann's attitude. He wouldn't make a fuss about it. He never fussed. He'd been christened Percy Prann, and at an early age he had realized that with such a name, the cards were stacked against him; and he'd given up the struggle. A Percy he remained throughout his life, meek and impotent. A Percy he looked, a man of smallish stature with an oversized head and long face and a prominent wart on the left of his chin, which in some strange way gave him a slightly feminine appearance. But in spite of his illness and mildness, he still had some of his mousy sparkle left, some of his late-Victorian humor. ("So brave," said Mrs. Prann, "the way he jokes and carries on. It should be a lesson to all of us.") He liked to be entertaining at the dinner table. What he called entertaining. Every evening he'd bring home some joke or story or problem to be brought forth with the dessert. Sometimes the stories were vulgar. *Risqué*, Mrs. Prann called them. "Percy," she'd say, "don't be *risqué*. Remember Dora." And Percy, looking coy and drawing his chin down almost inside his high, ill-fitting collar, would say, "Oho,

Dora knows a thing or two; she's a big girl now." And Dora would give a sickly smile. The problems were invariably of the type that involved moving pennies or matches around on the tablecloth. The very night of his death he brought home a particularly confusing one about three missionaries and three cannibals crossing a river in a small boat; and Mrs. Prann had to sit at the table for an hour and attempt to work it out, though she became absolutely helpless when asked to use her mind. The more obvious it got that his wife couldn't solve it, the more delighted Mr. Prann became. "Didn't I tell you this was a corker? I stumped the whole office with this one. Yessir, I stumped them all!" And he built a proud, awkward smile around his gleaming false teeth.

Of course, Mrs. Prann wasn't concentrating. Not on the problem. She was thinking how non-existent Percy already seemed to her. He really didn't touch her any more. He was a shadow. He might have been already dead except that after he'd *really* gone, things would be easier. The insurance would come in handy. They might even take a little trip. For Dora's sake. Stalk the prey. Bag a man for her. Good old Percy; one of his sterling virtues was his life insur-

ance. She must do something nice for him. Something to make him happy. Well, she was going to have him buried in that nice lot under the pine trees. He'd like that. He always liked pine trees. She remembered on their honeymoon he'd say, "Smell those pines, Henrietta, smell those pines?" And she'd say, "Yes" whether she did or not. He had bought a green pine pillow once. It said Aroma of the Pines on it. She wondered what had become of it. She mentally searched attic, barn, and old bureaus. If she could find it, she'd bury it with him.

After dinner, Mrs. Prann told Dora while they did the dishes that all day she'd had a weight on her chest. Not physical, but spiritual. She was afraid it was an omen. A bad omen, of course. "It's just like something pressing me down, pressing me right down." And she illustrated with a crushing dramatic gesture. Mr. Prann did three cross-word puzzles and went to bed. Later in the night, Toby, the cat, who slept with Mr. Prann, came meowing into Mrs. Prann's room, waking her up. "I wonder what that can mean," she said. "I wonder if . . ." Maybe the pressing on her chest had not been in vain. She went quickly into Mr. Prann's room and found him with

his mouth wide open and his heart quite still. She put his teeth in his mouth. Then she went to Dora's room. "Your father has passed on," she said. And she cried real tears. As any wife would.

III

The next day Roger appeared on the scene and persuaded Mrs. Prann to spend a lot more money than she'd intended on poor Percy's funeral. Roger had a way with him, and Mrs. Prann found herself letting him take a great deal of the responsibility, so that she had some time to sit by the window and cry and try to settle in her mind just what Percy's last words had been. She finally decided they were: "Have I got a clean nightshirt?" Well, they were no good. She'd have to think up new ones. Maybe he'd said something to the cat just before putting out the light. She'd say he had anyway. He often did; so that would only be a half-lie. Something sweet and kind that would show people how fond he'd been of animals.

Roger was a blessing. She had debated a bit about what undertaker to patronize, Fairchild or Budge. Budge was cheaper; but he skimped a little on the trim-

things. She finally decided she better do things up brown, go the whole hog, and have Fairchild, who interred the best people. It would use up all their ready money, but if they skimmed on poor Percy and then went tootling off on trips and buying new clothes, what would people say? And Mrs. Prann felt she had made no mistake. Roger Fairchild could put across a good funeral. Percy's was definitely a success. It had a dash and a theatrical sureness that was extremely gratifying. Percy was buried from the chapel of the funeral home, which in itself was a wise move, since Percy's acquaintances (he had no friends), who could fill the chapel, would have been a sorry little group in a large church. The flowers were beautiful and almost overpowering in their fragrance. The coffin was one of the most expensive. The music was properly ethereal. And Dora looked as attractive as she ever had in her life, with her face glowing from the attention she was receiving. And Mrs. Prann had had a permanent, which, though it didn't show with the veil and all, was very comforting to her. And, finally, the Rev. Whitehead said such lovely vague things about Percy. That he had been a good man. That he had lived a gentle

Christian life. That he had been a devoted husband and a loving father. That his like was not often found in the hurly-burly of modern living. That his passing was a great loss to the community. And on that high note of eulogy the service ended; and the people rose and moved slowly up to peer into the coffin and see in a new light that astoundingly lovely soul, whom they had apparently so underrated and who was now lost to them forever. There he lay, drab and incongruous in his box of gleaming satin, which most certainly had been fashioned for a Sleeping Beauty. True, he looked a little prettier than he had when alive, due to Roger's artistic touch, but still he was no substitute for a Sleeping Beauty. The people who passed were impressed only by the grotesqueness of him, and they looked at him glumly with mild curiosity as they would at an exhibit in a museum. Later, of course, some of them said nice things to the grief-stricken wife and daughter. "Oh, my, he looks so natural," said Mrs. Vetch, as she had at every local funeral for the last fifteen years. "Wouldn't you think he was just sleeping!" Except that there's no snoring, thought Dora.

Yes, Mrs. Prann assured herself,

everything was just right. Even the Pierce-Arrows that carried them to the cemetery were luxurious and comfortable. Mrs. Prann hadn't been in a big elegant car like this since the day five years ago when she'd fallen and sprained her ankle on Fullerton avenue and the Peck's chauffeur had come along in that Rolls-Royce and taken her to the doctor. And the hearse was brand new and streamlined. And the spot where Percy was laid away, under the pine trees in the stylish new "Garden of Memory", was really quite choice. Mrs. Prann cried because everything was so nice and proper. She had done right by her husband; she deserved his life insurance.

IV

But there was no insurance. In that last desperate year, after keeping it up for twenty-two years, Percy Prann had had to let it lapse. And he'd been too ashamed to tell his wife. Or too afraid to face her resentment. When Mrs. Prann, after writing and writing to the insurance company, was forced to face the truth, that there would be no dividends from Percy's pretty funeral, she sat rocking frantically in the Boston rocker by the front window. She sucked her lip in and out

of the hole left by her missing teeth. This was a crisis. Suddenly they had no money. They had two useless lots in Florida and this house and its furnishings. But that was all. What she'd always feared had happened. What would Percy have done? Nothing. But she'd do something. She had been a Fleming before her marriage; and the Flemings always died fighting. She would do something for the sake of her poor fatherless chick and, incidentally, herself.

Dora was up in her bedroom, crying. She had sharp painful visions of herself, gaunt and ragged, standing in breadlines. She'd have to scrub floors or beg on the streets. Or lead an immoral life maybe. But no, she couldn't even do that. She didn't know how. She cried harder than ever. Then she heard her mother calling from downstairs.

"Dora," called Mrs. Prann.

"Ye-es," answered Dora through her sobs.

"I'm going to ask Roger Fairchild to dinner tonight."

Dora stopped crying. At first she was puzzled. Then she caught on. She went downstairs.

"Mother," said Dora peevishly, "you don't think I could ever become interested in Roger Fairchild, do you?"

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Prann. "He likes you."

Dora knew she *could* become interested in him. As she could in any man, given half a chance. But to maintain what little self-respect she had left, she must pretend he was definitely beneath her.

"Me marry an undertaker!" she screamed. "An old fat undertaker!"

"He's not old, and he's not very fat. And what's wrong with undertaking? It's an honorable profession. And apparently there's money in it."

Dora laughed hysterically and angrily. She took up her hat and purse and with wild abandon rushed out of the house and ended up at the afternoon showing of *Love After Dark* at the Arcadia.

Roger came to dinner; and Dora, in her new black uncrushable velvet, considered him. He had a strange brown skin. Not a healthy sun brown, but a blotched brown, as if he'd been stained with tobacco juice. His hair was black and stubbly. He had big lips that puffed a little and looked ripe, like berries. He laughed a lot, showing big horse teeth. He seemed awfully kind.

Being a self-made man, he told them at length about his business. And he certainly seemed to be

making a success of the Fairchild Funeral Home.

"The human touch," he said. "That's what the whole business needed. And that's what I brought into it. My first funeral parlor was dark and heavy and depressing. People hated to go there. I could see it. It ought to be homey, I thought, so people'd feel right at home. And not at all embarrassed. It ought to be cozy like a booknook. So I made it cozy like a booknook. I put in flowers and canaries and comfortable chairs. And what happened? Why, the next year I doubled the business. Yes-sir, you got to be up-and-coming, as the fella says. Why, just a couple of months ago *Casket and Sunnyside*—that's a trade journal—had quite an article about me, quite an article." He beamed at the thought of it. And Mrs. Prann beamed with him. "I'll show it to you some time," he went on.

"Oh, we'd love to see it, wouldn't we, Dora?" said Mrs. Prann.

"Yes, we'd love to," Dora echoed.

Roger leaned back happily in his chair. "Well, finally I was able to move to the big place I've got now, which is pretty nice, you've got to admit. And now—now I'm thinking of opening a place in East Orange. And that'll be the

first step towards a chain of funeral homes. Yessir, a whole chain of them. All through these suburbs."

"Well, Roger," said Mrs. Prann, "you certainly are smart!"

And Roger tilted back his head and roared, as if she'd said the cleverest thing in the world.

After dinner they talked for several hours. That is, Roger talked, and Dora and Mrs. Prann listened well. And when Roger left at ten o'clock, he felt he liked the Pranns. They were nice, understanding people.

Within the next two weeks, he took them driving twice and to the movies once. Then on a Saturday night he asked Dora to go dancing with him at Starland. Dora was delighted. She could wear the new purple that she'd bought just on the chance that something like this might happen. It had taken her last bit of savings. By this time she definitely wanted Roger. Of course, she had wanted men before this, many of them. Clark Gable, for instance. But this was different. Her desire for Roger was more urgent and intense, perhaps because she realized with joyous surprise that there really was a possibility of her getting him.

They sat in a booth at Starland, caught in the weird light of a

green silk wall lamp. Roger drank whisky sours, and Dora toyed with a sherry flip. She couldn't drink much; it made her break out. Anyway she wanted to be sure she kept her wits clear tonight. This was a big night. Roger was in fine form; he told a great deal about his childhood. He'd apparently been a very funny little boy. And Dora told about some of the funny things that had happened while she was teaching. Then Roger told some limericks. And Dora said she wished she could remember things like that. She certainly did: but she couldn't; she just didn't have that kind of a mind. Then Roger told a couple of stories. Very naughty; both about toilets. And Dora giggled and giggled and told Roger what a card he was. They danced a couple of dances, too, Roger pushing Dora around and around with elephantine precision. But Dora made up for Roger's stolidness by tossing her head a great deal and casting sidelong glances and moving her feet almost too much. When the orchestra played a slow, dreamy piece, Dora put her arm further around Roger's massive shoulders and leaned heavily against his warm bulk. It was heaven! At one point she saw some young people she had taught for a while several years ago. They

were in high school now and very sophisticated. She waved gaily at them, and some of them waved back vaguely. They looked coldly at her. She wasn't sure they remembered her. She hoped they did. (Now Miss Prann *has* got a man!) The music grew dreamier and dreamier, and Dora grew dreamier too, lolling blissfully on Roger's fat chest.

Driving home, Roger said, "What I can't understand is why you aren't married."

"Maybe I've been waiting for Mr. Right to come along," said Dora.

"Smart girl," said Roger.

"Well, some girls," Dora said very seriously, "some girls can up and marry the first man that comes along. I'm not like that. I'm too choosy." And she believed it.

Roger was very serious now, too. "You got to be that way nowadays," he said. "I'm that way. When I marry, it's got to be a girl who means the whole world to me. The whole world." He was impressed with the seriousness of his own voice. He drove a while in silence.

A little later he said, "It's funny, but we seem to look at things sort of the same way, don't we?"

"I guess we do," Dora said. "It's funny."

And then they arrived in front of Dora's house. Roger turned off the engine and the lights.

"Dora," he said and reached for her hand, "do you think maybe I'm that Mr. Right you've been waiting for?"

Dora's heart beat as if it would rip open. Roger slid one finger along the inside of her arm. "I think you are, Roger," Dora said. "Will you marry me, Dora?"

"Yes."

And Roger grabbed her in his arms and kissed her. And in that long, full kiss was more excitement than Dora had ever known. She trembled. She broke away from Roger's mouth and laid her cheek fast to his cheek.

"Roger," she said, her voice uncontrollable.

"Oh, you darling," said Roger, nestling his big mouth against her neck. "You darling baby girl!"

Dora laughed then and cried and felt scared and silly. But she loved it; she loved it better than anything that had ever happened to her.

V

Dora's life had a point now. She was going to marry Roger in two months. ("I guess we can stall off our creditors that long," her

mother said: "And fortunately your poor father didn't want us to mourn for any length of time.") Now when Dora lay in bed mornings, her dreams had some basis of reality; Roger was in them. She found it suddenly thrilling to take a man into her life, whom she had to try to please, whom she had to consider, whose interests she had to learn. And Roger was such a nice man, when all was said and done. His treatment of her was very gratifying. He was so proud of her. He seemed almost as proud of her as he was of his Funeral Home. And that was saying a good deal.

Shortly after they were engaged, Roger showed Dora all over the Home. His equipment was the very latest, his palms were fresh, his canaries melodious, and some of his caskets had chromium trimmings. Dora did her best to act interested.

"Well," said Roger, "don't you think it's a pretty nifty little outfit?"

"It certainly is, Roger," said Dora. But to herself she thought it was going to take quite a while to get used to living upstairs in a funeral home. Of course, her mother was going to sell the old house and come to live with them, so Dora wouldn't get lonely when

Roger was working. And it would only be for a year; because Dora had made Roger promise that he'd build a house out in the smart Woodside Drive section. An English-type house. With three bathrooms.

"And do you love me?" said Roger.

"What do you think?" Dora said.

Roger grinned; and Dora knew he was thinking the wrong thing. But did it matter? She was so awfully happy.

She really was. A few days later, while she and her mother sewed on various articles for her trousseau, Dora was amazed at her own happiness. She would never have believed she could have been so happy. Her wedding announcements had just come, and looking at the gleaming cards and the finely scrolled engraving and running her finger over them had sent wriggles of pleasure up her spine. Now she was like other girls. Like Esther Drake and Marjie Patterson and Lois Hughes. Like Lisbeth Hall and Mary Downes and Jane Berry. Her life seemed to mean something now. It was like one of those little puzzles in which you tried to get the car in the garage or the mouse in the hole. You jiggled and jiggled helter-skelter, and then

all of a sudden, pop! the mouse was in. Her life was like that; she'd jiggled it around aimlessly and almost given up, then suddenly she'd won. She told her mother this idea.

"Dora," said Mrs. Prann, "you do have the most original thoughts. I do believe you could have been a writer, if you'd wanted to. I really do."

She was sewing on a nightgown, and the upper part was all made of the lovely French lace that Dora's Aunt May had brought her from Paris fifteen years ago. It was soft and beautiful and rich-looking.

"It seems funny to think of having an undertaker right in the family," said Mrs. Prann. "But then Mrs. Doubleday's Mattie married a man who taught Hindu languages. That always seemed funny, too. . . . It's a queer world." That was Mrs. Prann's favorite generalization. She never got tired of the profundity of it.

Dora stared at the loveliness of the lacy nightgown. Mrs. Prann saw her looking at the garment and held it up in the light, running her fingers over it and relishing it gently.

"I'm glad we spent all that money on poor Papa," said Mrs. Prann. "The mahogany and the

inner spring mattress and all. It was worth it. Look what we got out of it."

Yes, thought Dora, Roger was what we got out of it. Good, kind Rotarian Roger. Roger with the steady income. And maybe some day she could even learn to love him.

Dora was so happy indeed that she was a little afraid. And when she heard that awful thing about Roger she kept saying, "I knew something would happen to spoil it all. I just knew it." She heard it from Mrs. Vetch, who considered it her duty to tell Dora. Mrs. Vetch said that it was common knowledge that for years Roger had been living in sin with his Lady Embalmer.

VI

Dora, almost in hysterics, went and told her mother.

"What on earth is his Lady Embalmer?" asked Mrs. Prann.

"You know, to embalm the women and children," said Dora. "It's considered more delicate."

"Did you know he had one?"

"Oh, yes, he's mentioned her casually."

"Have you seen her?"

"No."

"Well, I wouldn't get all upset.

I'd go right to Roger and ask him."

"It must be true," sobbed Dora. "Everybody knows it. I knew something like this would happen!"

"Oh, now, after all," said Mrs. Prann, "a little indiscretion . . ."

"Mother! How can you!" shrieked Dora. "It's loathsome! I won't have anything to do with him! I won't ever see him again!" And she flung herself on her bed, while Mrs. Prann went for the aromatic spirits of ammonia.

And then she had to remind Dora of several things: that many a short-sighted woman had let a moment's annoyance spoil her future; that Roger was a good match; that Dora'd never get a chance like this again; that she was twenty-nine and had been looking for a man for over a decade; that the bills were pressing in on them. All things that Dora never wanted brought out into the open. But she did listen; and soon she was just sulking instead of crying.

When Dora confronted Roger with this damaging piece of gossip, Roger, of course, denied it. His fat face grew very solemn. Maud Stevens, he said, had never been more to him than a capable assistant in his work. ("You see," said Mrs. Prann.) But Dora wanted to see this Maud Stevens.

She believed Roger, because she wanted to believe him. But just the same she was curious to see what a Lady Embalmer might look like. So the day after her little emotional upheaval, she went to the Funeral Home, and Roger introduced her to Maud Stevens.

They sat in the sitting-room, where the canaries and the well-dusted rubber plants were. Dora was, she felt, looking her smartest. "Just in case," she had said to her mother. But there was no necessity for her to look her best. Miss Stevens turned out to be an almost gaunt woman in her late thirties with a long face and bony body. She had a few streaks of gray in her hair. She wore an extremely simple brown dress that resembled a uniform. As far as Dora could see the only possible points in her favor were a certain grace of movement and an indefinable regal something about her. She was certainly not a woman to whom a man might be easily attracted. And yet, when Dora saw her, she knew it was true. She was Roger's mistress.

The three of them sat rather formally and discussed the weather and the difficulty of keeping dogs out of gardens and the way the town was becoming a regular little city with so many new shops and

all. And somehow Dora knew it was true. Just as certainly as if Maud Stevens had told her. It was in the very immobility of her face, in the way she smiled casually at Roger, even while calling him Mr. Fairchild. Dora tried to think what to do. For a moment she thought of getting up and running out of the house. She thought of calling Roger every vile name she knew, of screaming his shame from the housetops, of ruining his career. But then her frantic anger died away, and she knew there was only one thing to do. Ignore it. Ignore the whole thing. Maud Stevens being Roger's mistress didn't alter the fact that Dora was twenty-nine, that she wanted a husband, and all the rest of it. The important thing was to let nothing interfere with her wedding. Her mother had been right. Always right. She would do nothing now. There'd be plenty of time to get Maud Stevens out of the way when she was Mrs. Roger Fairchild.

After a while Miss Stevens excused herself, saying she had some work to finish. When she had gone Roger looked at Dora with a faint vacant smile. Then he frowned. There was something he had to do. Maybe he'd seen the look of realization on Dora's face, or he'd remembered that he'd been a Boy

Scout and that, after all, an essentially decent man had to draw the line somewhere. Anyway, he must tell Dora the truth.

"Dora," he said.

"What, Roger?"

"This isn't going to be easy to say."

Dora held her breath. Oh, no, he mustn't say it. He mustn't!

"You see, the gossips are right. Maud and I, we . . . well, as the fella says, we . . ."

"I see, Roger," said Dora quietly. She couldn't look at him. She couldn't look at anything but the carpet.

Roger wiggled uncomfortably. "I lied to you," he said. "I deceived you. It was a rotten mean trick. And I guess you won't want to marry me. I guess we better call the whole thing off."

What should Dora do? She knew her next move was to agree with Roger, to give him back his ring, to leave. But she couldn't. She couldn't throw over all her plans for happiness and security. But what *could* she do? (If only Mother were here!) It was all very well to ignore a scandal as long as no one was sure you knew about it. But once it had been thrown in your face, then could you ignore it? Well, she could be forgiving and understanding. She could play

the noble, self-sacrificing wife. She'd seen it done hundreds of times in the movies. Yes, that was the thing to do.

"Roger," she said, "you've hurt me terribly. But let's not let this ruin everything. I'm willing to forgive and forget. Really I am."

"Oh, that would be too much, Dora."

"Really I am," repeated Dora.

Roger's face flushed. Her goodness embarrassed him. He didn't deserve her.

"We'll get married," Dora went on, "and you can let Miss Stevens go. And we'll just forget all about this little episode."

She was an angel, that's what Dora was, thought Roger.

"Oh, but I couldn't let Maud go," he said. "I need her in my work. Female embalmers are scarce."

So he didn't want to let her go, thought Dora in a panic. Maybe he loves her. Maybe he wants her instead of me!

"But, Roger," said Dora, "you wouldn't expect me to live right upstairs with that woman working here. You wouldn't expect that!"

"Oh, no, no!" said Roger. "But it's a difficult situation. That's why I think we better call our engagement off."

It was on the tip of Dora's

tongue to say: But the wedding announcements are all printed. But that would sound silly at this moment. This was the moment for drama. Dora knew she should say: Roger, it's got to be this woman or me. Which do you choose? That's what she should say. But she was afraid. She was afraid of his answer.

"Now, Roger," said Dora, trembling, "if I'm willing to make an adjustment, surely you ought to be."

"No," repeated Roger miserably, "I think we better just call the whole thing off. I'd never make you happy."

"Yes, you would, Roger!" Oh, if she could only tell him *how* happy he could make her! If she could only explain that she couldn't give him up. At any price. That she had to have security. And a man. And the dignity of being a matron. But what could she say to him? What would he understand? He'd understand sentiment.

"Roger," pleaded Dora, "I love you. Can't you see how much I love you? And when two people love each other, the only thing that matters is that they be together."

This was too beautiful a thought for Roger. He saw Dora sitting there, white and pathetic and sweet, and he thought what a

coarse, misunderstanding brute he was.

"I'm taking it for granted," Dora went on, "that, in spite of everything, you love me more than . . . than . . ."

"Oh, I do, I do," said Roger.

He took her in his arms. The tears came into his eyes.

"You're the noblest spirit," he said solemnly.

Dora cried, too.

There was a knock at the door, and Maud Stevens returned. Dora kept her arms defiantly around Roger. You just wait, she thought, looking at Maud, you just wait till I'm Mrs. Roger Fairchild. I'll attend to you, you old goat.

"Mr. Fairchild," said Maud, "old Mrs. Hungerford has quite a mustache. Shall I leave it or shave it off?"

VII

So the wedding announcements were sent off as scheduled, and the wedding took place quietly in proper fashion. Dora felt extremely young and girlish, and Mrs. Prann cried fondly all over her new facial, and Roger was delighted with the rip-roaring send-off given him by his fellow Rotarians. Everybody was happy.

For their honeymoon, Roger de-

cided they would take four or five days to drive leisurely to the Funeral Directors' convention in Indianapolis, thus killing two birds with one stone.

The first night they spent in a large luxurious room in a Philadelphia hotel. Dora in her lovely new nightgown lay blissfully in the comfortable bed. She dreamily caressed her platinum wedding ring.

Over in a corner, Roger took off his union suit and stood brown and paunchy and a little shiny. Like a Buddha, or Charlie Chan in the movies.

Well, thought Dora, here I am. Any moment now, I'll be in bed with a man. Just like Esther Drake and Marjie Patterson and Lois Hughes. Like Lisbeth Hall and Mary Downes and Jane Berry. And to think it was Papa's death that brought him to me. Well, it goes to show that it's an ill wind and so on.

And then because she was so very happy, she indulged in one of her entertaining little fantasies. Here she was stretched out with an undertaker beside her. This wasn't marriage; it was death.

Then she felt Roger's brown, sticky hand lift her left breast right out from under Aunt May's Paris lace. No, it wasn't death; it was

worse than death. That's what they called it, Worse Than Death. Only not when your husband did it. She was pleased with that little twist of her mind. It was pretty clever.

She giggled. Roger giggled, too. "Ootsie-wootsie," he said, "oo's

my ootsie-wootsie wifey!"

It was all right when your husband did it. Husband! A husband at last. And people had to die; and they had to be buried. And undertakers ate well.

She was fixed for life.



DOOR TO THE NIGHT

BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

ALL along, he had had half a thought
 The light he saw burned brighter than it ought.
 No house out there so far on a lonesome road
 Had any right to such a lamp as glowed
 Through the leafy boughs, somewhere ahead.
 Something was wrong, that was what he said
 To himself, not thinking of it much —
 Something was wrong ahead, illness or such.
 Then it struck him full, he held his breath,
 Perhaps all lamps in the house, perhaps it was death.

But just as he stopped stock-still in his vague fear,
 The light was just too high, and it swung clear.
 It was the globed, bright moon, with one edge broken,
 And the house ahead which he'd bespoken
 Evil for was not there anywhere,
 Only the tired old wanderer of the air.
 He felt like singing. But it struck him then
 How there might come another time again
 When he might really come upon a light
 In a house which would be door to the night.

THIS MOTHER'S DAY BUSINESS

BY EUGENE PHARO

THE American habit of celebrating Mother's Day on the second Sunday of this month has become so firmly established during the past twenty-nine years that some inquiry into its origin may prove of value, even at the risk of being charged with impiety. For the sacred national festival has assumed such importance that it may in time supplant the quaint custom of women becoming mothers, until, like the Constitution and the Ten Commandments, they serve only to remind us of ancient myth and Victorian dignity.

To begin with, the observance of Mother's Day in the face of present reluctance, at least among the more astute of the capable sex, to assume the heroic duties of old-fashioned motherhood, is only one of a hodgepodge of paradoxes connected with the occasion. For oddly enough, Mother's Day was originated by a spinster. It was first given form in Christian churches whose feminine prototype is accepted as a Virgin, and which retain more than an overtone of the

early asceticism which declared the gamboling necessary to motherhood to be a sin, even among married folk. And although most of the early agitation for the Day was conducted by women and clergymen, apparently with unselfish motive, its wide secular acceptance was established almost exclusively by go-getting businessmen who made no secret of their desire to extract handsome financial profits.

One element in the credo of Mother's Day is the devoted self-sacrifice of mothers; but unfortunately they have also been induced to look with expectant and critical eye for a definite return on a definite day each year, in forms ranging from personal visits and telegrams to boxes of candy, ear-rings, necklaces, stream-lined automobiles, trips to the tropics, or a fling at the night clubs. Virtually every sacerdotal suggestion for celebrating Mother's Day, however, whether revealed from the pulpit, illuminated in newspapers and magazines, poured in sirupy sinuosities through the radio, or dra-

matized in shop windows, is founded upon the convention that such mothers as survive sit at home and knit, or bustle about the kitchen baking cakes and pies, while they dream of the sterling qualities they instilled into their children as the latter squatted mooning at the maternal knee. If the absurdity of all this has occurred to any person of discretion, he has bitten his lip in hysterical silence rather than be castigated as a heretic.

Commercialism has become so blatantly a part of the activities hinging on the Day that its founder has become obsessed with it, and has devoted more of her time to fighting the alleged evil than to evangelizing the festival's tenderer meanings. But her almost single-handed campaign has been no more effective in withstanding the onslaughts of our peculiar *Kultur* than the Sermon on the Mount has been in shaping the policies of labor unions. Miss Anna Jarvis, the lady in question, a thin, ardent-eyed person now approaching her sixtieth birthday, once complained to a reporter: "Everyone else has made money, but I never made a cent out of Mother's Day. It has cost me thousands of dollars in postage, stationery, clerical work, educational leaflets, buttons, etc.

I had hoped to find a benefactor who would contribute money to the work, while I contributed my time. I never found one."

Miss Jarvis is the recipient of a comfortable income, and leads a somewhat solitary life in an old-fashioned brick house in Philadelphia. Memorabilia of her mother are the most noticeable furnishings of the residence. Among them are many urns, one filled with palm leaves from the floral offerings at her mother's funeral. A large picture of the deceased, surrounded by holly wreaths and palms and confronted by a large bowl of flowers, makes a virtual shrine of the best parlor. Whether in the end her own portrait will hang there and the building be made a national holy of holies, to which each May fervent pilgrims will come carrying copyrighted blooms, and singing anthems to which all broadcasting and other rights are reserved, is at present a subject only for speculation.

II

In the historical arcana of the maternal festival, it appears that the thought of Mother's Day first occurred to Miss Jarvis when she was on the verge of thirty. The superintendent of the Sunday school in

her mother's home town asked her to arrange a memorial service for the departed parent, who had been a great power for good in the church. It was while engaged in this task that Miss Jarvis was filled to overflowing with thoughts of the "growing lack of consideration for absent mothers among worldly-minded, busy, grown-up children; of the thoughtless neglect of home ties and of loving consideration engendered by the whirl and pressure of modern life . . . and of the need of a reminder of the loving, unselfish mother, living or dead". The first general observance of the day followed in her home town, in May, 1908. Held in churches and Sunday schools of the Quaker City, its emotional appeal was at once recognized by a practicing evangelist of the day, the Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, who hastened to add its power to his Gospel mission. "The observance of Mother's Day," he asserted, "is one of the most beautiful suggestions I have heard in years. I have adopted it in my own work, and expect after this to have a Mother's Day in the campaigns." One is left to imagine the tinkling of silver in subsequent years, when the front pews were occupied by wrinkled dames thrust suddenly into prominence, and the hearts of

the faithful were stirred to make amends for their absent-minded neglect.

In 1909, it was reported that "a host of Christian people", estimated at about 200,000, observed the Day. By 1910 it had reached across the United States, and the governor of the State of Washington issued a proclamation:

A mother's love—how sweet the name!

What is a mother's love?

A noble, pure and tender flame,

Enkindled from above,

To bless a heart of earthly mold;

The warmest love that can grow cold;

This is a mother's love.

In recent years there has sprung up in many portions of our land a most beautiful custom—that of setting aside one day in the year to be designated as Mother's Day. Of the many observances we have, there is probably none that appeals more to the average person than this, and as long as this nation shall endure, may this custom never die.

Therefore, in conformance with this usage, I, Marion E. Hay, Governor of the State of Washington, do hereby designate and set apart Sunday, May 8, 1910, as Mother's Day, and do recommend and request that it be observed as such throughout this Commonwealth. I urge that, on that day, all persons wear a white flower in acknowledgment and honor of the one who went down into the valley of the shadow of death for us. No more fitting place can be found for holding special services of this character than in our churches, and I request that all religious organizations throughout our State prepare

a special program for this day, and I urge all good citizens to attend these services.

Religious organizations throughout the country were not long in acting upon the Governor's suggestion. In the succeeding decades, so thoroughly have they canvassed its various possibilities that now the Day is a regular part of the year's program in most Sunday schools and churches. Printed services are provided "gratis" by central boards of the various denominations—under the sole condition that the Mother's Day offering be forwarded to the board. This has stimulated creativeness among officers of local churches, who have found these offerings to be well above the ordinary, and have conformed their own services in order to be able to keep them. The kind of service used was foreshadowed in a Seattle church as early as 1910. Here it was arranged that the ladies bring bouquets of flowers, raise them aloft at a given signal from the pastor, and hold them there while a blessing was pronounced. At the close of the service the flowers were gathered and placed on the graves of mothers whose relatives were not in the city to perform the duty. In this service, the sociologist will note, no mention was made either of liv-

ing mothers, or of men. Whether it was assumed that men enter the world, so far as churches are concerned, without woman's parturition, or whether it was recognized that as yet men did not have quite the personal motive for exalting motherhood that inhered in the feminine heart, does not appear.

By 1914, Mother's Day, observed consistently in Philadelphia and sporadically throughout the country, was, through the efforts of Miss Jarvis, brought to the attention of Congress. On May 8, a joint resolution was approved and signed by President Wilson, establishing the Day as an ecclesiastical and secular event that can be escaped by no observant American. This document, which in some age may be even more revered than the Mosaic code of the Jews is by Christians, appears in the *Congressional Record* as follows:

Whereas the service rendered the United States by the American mother is the greatest source of the country's strength and inspiration; and

Whereas we honor ourselves and the mothers of America when we do anything to give emphasis to the home as the fountainhead of the State; and

Whereas the American mother is doing so much for the home, for moral uplift, and religion, hence so much for good government and humanity; Therefore be it

Resolved, etc. That the President of the United States is hereby authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the government officials to display the United States flag on all government buildings, and the people of the United States to display the flag at their homes or other suitable places on the second Sunday in May, as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country.

Section 2. That the second Sunday in May shall hereafter be designated and known as Mother's Day, and it shall be the duty of the President to request its observance as provided for in this resolution.

With such high sanctions, Mother's Day should have promptly taken its place with Christmas and Easter as an occasion for disinterested meditation on the inner truths of religion and for such devotions as tend to ennoble mankind's baser nature. But as has been indicated, this was not the case. The florists, the confectioners, the makers of kitchenware, and the fabricators of automobiles and refrigerators proceeded to advertise their goods in connection with the Day, and, in the case of the florists at least, to raise prices so high that the suspicion grew that these entrepreneurs were more interested in making money than in according to mothers the adoration that was now their legal due. So fancy were the prices charged for a single carnation that the first defense Miss

Jarvis adopted against such exploitation had reasonable success. This consisted of manufacturing a copyrighted celluloid button that pictured a carnation. Moreover, the florists were discouraged by the noble action of other business interests. The confectioners and jewelers, for example, excoriating the outrageous tactics of the florists, discoursed on the ephemeral nature of the latter's wares, and the fact that they were too often used to honor the departed. Living mothers, it was delicately suggested, would rather munch a chocolate cream or fondle a pearl necklace.

The aid of these commercial well-wishers was not welcomed by Miss Jarvis. In fact, she resented it, just as she has since resented any activities that hint even remotely at self-interest, or encroach upon the prerogatives that she has retained as the mother of Mother's Day. In 1934, she protested to the Post Office Department because it reproduced her copyrighted symbol, the carnation, on a Mother's Day stamp. In 1923, she disrupted a joyous Mother's Day celebration in New York because of the sale of carnations. In September, 1925, she was arrested for disorderly conduct while attempting to break up a meeting of the War Mothers'

Association, because it had, without consulting her, adopted the white carnation as an emblem. She has berated more than one philanthropic organization for using Mother's Day sentiment in appealing for funds. And before setting out for New York in 1935 to make her usual protests to various organizations, she issued a statement to the press in which she charged that the Day had become a commercialized racket.

III

The foregoing relates only the surface indications of the growth of Mother's Day, and of the synthesis whereby it has to a large extent superseded even mammy songs in the Republic's consciousness. It makes clear that the Day now serves as a focal point for formerly dispersed sentimentality, so that Mother and the annoying facts of motherhood can be ignored throughout the rest of the year. But just why this should be, remains a baffling question. Obviously, Americans feel that they must observe Mother's Day, now that it is here, even apart from commercial implications. Indeed, evidence that profit alone could not sustain it is to be found in England, where each year the confec-

tioners, envious of the Spring-time sales of American manufacturers, propose to create such a day. But it never comes to anything. The less demonstrative English smother it out of hand, in spite of the fact that promoters have emphasized the opportunity to dispose of left-over Christmas and Easter boxes of sweets. A few years ago there was a partial observance of Mother's Day in Germany, where a nice mixture of commerce and sentiment was achieved, somewhat on the American model; but it seems to be missing elsewhere. The thought suggests itself that Americans are uniquely bold and original, so that they alone are willing to glorify the obstetrical facts of life. But this is followed by a suspicion that we support Mother's Day because we are more infantile than the rest, and prefer to cling always to an apron string; a theory in support of which there is an embarrassing amount of evidence in the field of government. These are questions, however, that even mothers seem unable to answer, for such of them as I have consulted are no more communicative than a politician who is being asked by the press for his opinion of birth control.

When we consult history, we find it questionable whether the

fairly recent hint of such a Day, which happens to be English, or a deliberate throwback to the fertility rites of the East, birthplace of Cybele, the Great Mother of the Gods, or vernal ceremonies of pagan England, Germany, or Russia, provide sound basis for the occurrence of such a festival in the United States. Not even the English any longer observe the old Spring custom of Mothering Sunday, which arose when apprentices and others who had left the neighborhood of their mother church returned for a visit, usually bearing gifts for the "old folks". Nor does knowledge of fertility rites, easily procured from Sir James Frazer's *Golden Bough*, harmonize with the facts of American social and economic life, except as they are dimly suggested by burlesque shows and night-club revels. In any other way the very hint of fertility is as foreign to contemporary thought and impulse as, to any rational view, Mother's Day itself.

Further, it is less than satisfactory to stop at this point and say that we have Mother's Day because such Americans as happen to get born, love their mothers more than other nationals do and hence respect them more. This is patently not so. In fact, the anarchism that is a central feature of the American

character in regard to all law, extends to the home itself. It is doubtful whether there is any country where mothers actually have less influence upon their children than in the United States. The luscious little darlings are trained, when trained at all, almost entirely outside the home; and the time they spend within its walls and in the presence of either parent could not be much less without classing them as transients.

One writer has suggested that Mother's Day succeeded because the home had broken up, and in everyday life mother is not given particular attention. This explanation has considerable force. It at least accords with the national instinct to call things by pretty names, and to pretend that they are different than they are. Yet the same condition is true, in perhaps greater degree, of the American father and of the American mother-in-law; and days suggested to honor either of these personages have been taken almost entirely as a joke.

It may be that no single reason explains the vitality of Mother's Day, but that all of them must be taken together. The tag-ends of old superstitions about the prophetic wisdom and wonder-working magic of women; the in-

stinctive attitudes of men and women who have been made familiar with ancient, although almost completely outmoded, ideas about the family; the vast inertia of mental and spiritual habits that have been channeled from olden times when men had different beliefs and more limited knowledge—for instance, about the facts of procreation—may have caused the impulse to persist.

For mother-worship has indeed a pretty complexion. Being celebrated in the Spring, it stirs tribal memories of orgiastic ceremonies associated with planting and the

growth of new life. It provides an opportunity, even though it be only through sending a telegram worded by the telegraph company, of making an obeisance to the kind of person we wish, in our sentimental moments, we actually were. It adds a social sanction similar to that enjoyed in certain communities by unbelievers who dress in their best and go to church on Sundays. And it may occasionally cause a really modern mother to calm the skepticism in her breast, lay aside her cocktail and cigarette, pat us on the hand, and call us a pretty good egg.



EGO

BY LOUISE McNEILL

I HAVE no need to plumb the depths of time
 To find man crawling upward from the slime
 And standing on two legs, nor have I need
 To look unto the open sky to read
 The constellation's story of the One
 Who set the numbered stars, the moon, the sun,
 Upon their courses, nor to browse
 Through dusty volumes for the Whys and Hows
 Of life, the Whither and the Whence,
 To ask the meaning of inheritance
 Or of environment. All answers lie
 Here in the capitalization of an I.

THE COST OF COMMUNISM

By ROBERT BYRON

IF THE world at this moment were to go into committee to decide on a panacea for all its ills, Communism would certainly be given a hearing. Such a committee, having instructed itself in the history of the movement and in the existing condition of the Russian masses, might base its report on the following argument: the usefulness of Communism, as in the case of a business reorganization, must be calculated according to whether its ultimate benefits can compensate for the cost of its establishment: to compute the cost must be the first stage of the inquiry; to compute the benefits, the second. Let us consider the matter in that fashion.

To begin with, when a political party proposes to eradicate the hopes, institutions, and relationships that have guided civilized humanity for 3000 years, and to replace them by new ones, its motives may be called in question but not its courage: for it must believe, first, that it can change the nature of human hopes; second, that the

society on which it is operating can survive a total dislocation of economic and political functions; and third, that it has the right to eliminate all who, even in secret, disagree with it. Communism has never shrunk from these convictions. Yet it is patent from the initial stages of foreign revolutions, and from the long course of the Russian one, that the cost of applying them, if estimated in terms of human suffering, has been, and always will be, so great as to drive the population to the brink of annihilation.

It will be argued, however, that the destructive process of Communist revolution will be only a temporary one, and that a period of suffering, even if it involves the whole population, is worth bearing for the sake of future generations. In Russia, that period lasted eighteen years; its end was marked in 1935 by the abolition of rationing and the revival of bourgeois social amenities. But this is not the whole estimate of the cost. There must be added to the total a limitation of

human dignity and a prostitution of the human brain which has not been equaled since the Dark Ages.

The question of Liberty in Soviet Russia is more than a philosophic abstraction. Even before the Revolution, police surveillance had made it a personal concern to every thinking individual. But in those days there was at least a hope of freedom in some Golden Age to come; and during the suffering period between 1917 and 1934, this hope still persisted, fed by the belief that once the Five-Year Plan had been accomplished, and rumors of plots and sabotage had been scotched, the government would feel sufficiently secure to restore individual "rights". The last three years, however, have seen the death of this hope; they have led both Russians and foreign observers to conclude that it is in the nature of Communist authority to be fearful for its place in the hearts of its subjects. The fear of spies, of that ubiquitous, invisible, and unmentionable body, the Secret Police, continues to pervade every action and every conversation in Russia. A man can be prosecuted for leaving his job, even if it is injuring his health and he has been offered a better one. He may not change his place of residence without permission, or so much as take

a holiday. Conversely, the government has the power, which it frequently exercises, of transporting not merely isolated political offenders, as the Czars did, but thousands of innocent families, to Trans-Caspia, the Urals, and Siberia. Forced labor on public works is a commonplace. Admittedly, such treatment of the individual is not a condition to be aimed at for its own sake, even by Russians. And if, as may now be assumed, it must be regarded as inherent in the Communist State, then the numbness, suspicion, and degradation which deform human character under a tyranny must be accounted another instalment of the suffering involved, and must be multiplied by the number of generations that the Communist State endures.

Again, however, it will be argued that this regimentation of the individual, even though arbitrary and cruel, is designed to serve the national interest. Slavery, it is pointed out, precludes unemployment. Military and commercial programs for public works are carried through under difficult conditions with a minimum of cost and trouble to the State. Towns in Siberia and the Urals benefit from the influx of educated exiles; Sverdlovsk, for instance, where the

Czar was murdered, has become a nursery of musical talent. And the exiles' places are filled, in vulnerable frontier districts, by persons of supposed integrity, who can be trusted to stand loyal in case of war with Germany or Japan. But there is another aspect of the question in which the public interest is not so well served. This is intellectual.

In the field of science, the past decade in Russia has seen additions to knowledge the extent of which is hardly realized by the outside world. This has been due partly to the Communist emphasis on the paramountcy of science over all other studies as the basis of industrial technique, and partly to the restriction of thought in other spheres, to the campaign against speculative impulse, and to the fetters imposed on the arts by a greedy ideology. But in the case of the Russian people, scientific study is accompanied by an excessive specialization, by a type of intellect impervious to general culture, which sees only the trees of its own small subject and never the wood of that larger process known as civilization. Taste, as it affects the ordinary man, has become reactionary and vulgar. The arts, but for acting and to some extent literature, are moribund. Music, ballet, painting,

and architecture, having lost the first novelty of revolutionary fervor, now borrow unskillfully from the past. Inventiveness is at a discount, and hence a catalepsy of the human spirit must be placed as a third item in the debit account.

The cost of establishing Communism, in Russia or anywhere else, may thus be estimated as (1) A period of acute suffering involving the whole population; (2) Permanent loss of freedom; and (3) Intellectual deformity of unpredictable growth. Such a price demands a high order of benefit in return.

II

Let us now examine the evidence for the second estimate in our inquiry — the computation of benefits. The population of the Soviet Union falls into three classes: the peasants; the industrial workers; and a new upper stratum of the better educated, comprising technicians, teachers, doctors, scientists, and artists. The peasants form the majority. Most of them have now been coerced into collective farms, where they are brought into touch with a larger world than the village, are imbued with political consciousness, and are discouraged in the old habits of sloth, drunken-

ness, and ferocity. Thus, inasmuch as their minds are more active than formerly, they are on the way to becoming better men. But judged by material standards, by the standards of Communism itself, their condition has deteriorated miserably. There can be no doubt on this point; for Russian literature has preserved an exhaustive picture of the former peasant life which serves as a rule of comparison. On the outskirts of the towns, where the villagers can sell vegetables and milk, there are occasional signs of peasant prosperity, such as radios and flowers in the windows. Hunting and fishing, where possible, also serve to raise life above subsistence level. But generally speaking, the condition of the Russian peasant from the Baltic to the Pacific is now lower in terms of food, clothing, and amenity than before the Revolution. It has reverted to serfdom.

In the case of the urban proletariat, comparison with pre-revolutionary conditions is impossible since the literature on this point is too scanty. But one thing is certain: the purchasing power of wages could not have been lower than it is at present, or the workmen would have starved to death. Today the workmen are not entirely dependent on purchasing

power, as many of the necessities of life are supplied in the factories. But whether they are free to buy what they want, or obliged to accept what they are given, the poverty of their meals and clothes, and the squalor in which most of them live, form a picture which has no parallel even in the depressed areas of England and Wales. It is in fact true to say that the average Russian workman in full employment, as seen in the provincial towns of the USSR, is considerably worse off than his unemployed fellow in England and America.

The "workers" and "toilers" are no longer the Darlings of the State as they were five years ago. They have begun to sink to the same position as in other countries, and their place has been taken by a new upper class, the brains of the Union. The situation of these people compares with that of the old intelligentsia, and in some respects, favorably. Genius cannot starve unheeded now. It is harnessed to the State, and is paid, by Russian standards, extremely well — so well in fact that artistic talent has become synonymous with wealth. Executive, administrative, and technical posts are also substantially paid; teachers and doctors not so well, but better than anyone else. Yet it is disconcerting

to find that members of this class are often hungry. All the same, they form a homogenous, and by comparison with the others, a contented group, anxious for more money, more privileges, and more power, which they will no doubt obtain as the toilers continue to descend in the national scale.

Thus, where living conditions are concerned, twenty years of Communism have left the peasants — *i.e.*, the majority of the population — worse off than before; have left the workmen much as they were; and have assigned the privileges of an upper class to brains instead of birth and graft. Estimated in terms of mankind's material well-being, of food, clothing, shelter, the achievement of the regime amounts to nothing, and the debt of its establishment still remains to be paid. To compute that debt in figures; to calculate the lives lost through battle, murder, famine, and disease; to assess the waste of treasure, buildings, and works of art; to measure the volume of unhappiness endured by youth and old age at the time of the Revolution, is impossible for lack of records. But to compute the compensation so far received is possible, because the evidence awaits anyone who cares to go and look for it.

III

Many people, however, particularly those best acquainted with Russian history and the Russian character, maintain that the achievement of the Revolution should not be judged in material terms, even if that is how it asks to be judged. They argue, with some truth, that the standard of living in a given year is a matter of comparative unimportance beside the stoicism displayed through so much suffering, the mental elevation that has emerged from it, and the ever-widening hopes of a happier future; that Communism, in any case, is the logical outcome of Russian thought for many generations (even if it needed a German to state it as an economic creed); and that the decay of Russian society before the Revolution, when every officer and official could be bribed, had so corrupted the administration that an upheaval was inevitable once the Czar had abdicated. From these arguments, it might seem that we have no business to criticize the efforts which the Russians have made to give effect to their ideal of mass-uplift and to reform their organization, whatever we may think of their methods in doing so. But this, unfortunately, does not

follow. For it is precisely on this point that the Russians will not meet us half-way. We may leave them alone, but they will not leave us alone.

There is no doubt that in the last three or four years, the Marxian theory of World Revolution has proved a most inconvenient burden to Stalin and his fellow rulers. Menaced by Germany and Japan, Russia needs friends; and friendship with England, for instance, is not likely to be consolidated while money and propaganda continue to percolate from Tashkent into India. But when a whole generation of young Russians has been educated to believe in the Marxian theory as a religion, even so ruthless a dictator as Stalin can hardly start denouncing the creed of which he himself is the proclaimed high priest. For the present, it is true, those transports of loathing which enliven the Russian press at the expense of the outside world are directed more towards Fascism than Capitalism. Nevertheless, the epithet *Capitalist* remains the staple term of abuse, and the belief that virtue is a prerogative of Russians only, while the rest of the world, Fascist or not, is steeped in sin, is still sedulously inculcated in the schools and universities. Furthermore, whether

Stalin likes it or no, Communists elsewhere look to Russia as their chief support and inspiration. Their encouragement, on the Russian side, may be conscious or unconscious. But the fact remains that Russia is the mainspring of an unceasing plot to upset the political and economic system of every country in the world, with the possible exception of Mexico.

The Russians therefore must forgive us if, with eyes sharpened by their criticism of ourselves, we so-called Capitalists take a look at them, and judge them by the facts, as opposed to the hopes, which their new system presents. The fascination which that system exercises on the discontented of other countries, and which inspires them with a wish to emulate it, is the fascination of a successful example as painted by a tireless propaganda. But when the facts behind the propaganda reveal that the example is not so successful after all; that the material condition of most Russians, instead of improving, has actually deteriorated since the establishment of Communism; and that any improvement which the future may promise will still have to outweigh a degree of misery and destruction without parallel in recorded history, we are entitled to suggest to those intellec-

tuals who see in Communism a cure for the world's ills, that the benefits of their proposed revolution to such a country as America could never, under any ascertainable circumstances, compensate for the penalties.

Since Russia is not such a country as America, we can, if we wish, respect the sincerity of the Russian leaders who, after the Revolution had brought their country to

ruin, have tried to put her on her feet again. But when those same Russians and their friends evince a kindly desire to put countries like England and America on a similar footing, we can truthfully reply that since our conditions in no way resemble those of Russia before 1917, we have no need of this assistance, nor any intention of being reduced to the condition of Russia after 1917 in order to receive it.



IN THE BLUE AIR

BY LOLA PERGAMENT

You were running down the night, you said.
 You were running wildly. There was a blue wind
 Blowing over your head.
 There was no escape from the world about you.
 There was no world without you.

I knew I was lost.
 I stood in a city now poetry in my mind and splendid.
 It was Autumn. There had been a feathery frost.
 I was cold. I was young. I was unbefriended.

Over and over again our dreams persist.
 Love in our separate sleep will be pity to bear
 With never your mouth on my breast, your body kissed
 In a strange night, now or in a lost city
 By my cold lips, hungry in the blue air.

YOU CAN'T BEAT THE LANDLORD

BY WILLIAM SEAGLE

WHILE the execution of contracts in expensive lawyer's suites is a luxury reserved to big businessmen, the tenant's lease is a legal document to which the average American puts his John Hancock dozens of times during his life. It constitutes the seemingly happy culmination of a protracted period of anguish which occurs virtually every year when the householder sublimates his pioneer spirit by moving from one apartment to another. After weeks of pounding the pavements on the alert for signs: "Apartment To Let", he is finally ready to sign on the dotted line. In the sales talk of the landlord's agents, he has probably been told that a lease is of little benefit to the landlord but a great bulwark for the tenant; it is supposed to give him that security against the whims of the landlord which no merely monthly tenant possesses. But, actually, he is hardly better off than the meanest squatter.

For the lease which he has signed—innumerable clauses in very small type on a standard printed

form bought by the landlord's lawyers in stationery stores by the gross—has been specially designed *not* for the protection of the tenant but for the protection of the landlord. A cynical renting agent once interrupted an apartment-hunting friend of mine by saying: "Don't bother to read the lease. There is nothing in it that can possibly be to your advantage." This, however, may be taken as a classic example of understatement. For, under the usual lease forms, the tenant is not only at a disadvantage, but is actually subjected to many inconveniences, humiliations, and risks of loss for which he will be unable ever to secure the slightest redress.

A lease, although only a printed form, is supposed to be a "contract", and freedom of contract, which normally enables individuals to adjust their relations according to needs and desires, is supposed to be one of the fundamentals of our contemporary economic society. Yet where there is no equality of bargaining power,

no free consent is possible. And a landlord is almost always able to impose his own terms. A prospective tenant who has located a desirable apartment has usually no alternative, because for family or business reasons he must locate in a particular neighborhood; he has no choice but to sign on the dotted line. Moreover, to put the tenant in an even more hopeless position, the landlords are not content to rely upon their natural monopolies—they have organized, and in every large city maintain a real estate board dedicated to protecting their legal interests.

The tenants, on the other hand, are not only unorganized but uninformed. Rarely, indeed, will a prospective lessee consult his lawyer before signing a printed form. In fact, leases are only too often signed without even being read. The agent may tell the tenant that it is the usual form, or if he is sufficiently unscrupulous, that it is the only standard legal form. And even if the applicant does read the lease, he will not be much better informed, for it is couched in language which he cannot comprehend. If by some strange chance he actually understands it, and protests, he will rarely be able to persuade the landlord to make any changes in the phraseology. Our

manual of real estate practice cautions landlords: "Do not make a practice of writing special clauses into a lease to please a tenant."

The very date of most leases testifies to the exercise of unreasonable power by the landlords. In some cities a stagger system is in effect in the dating of leases, but in New York City and most urban centers, all leases are drawn to expire on the same date, usually October 1, a day particularly inconvenient for parents who may wish to change a child's school during September. The landlord, of course, is entitled to protection against the premises being vacated during the Summer, when many families go to the country: but there is no reason why a lease should not expire during any of the other months. The fact of the matter is that the existing practice is designed to create an artificial scarcity during one month in the year, and thus simplify the landlord's management problems. But it is certainly a dismal nuisance not only to tenants but to the moving and utility companies.

Insofar as the terms of the lease itself are concerned, the landlord rarely even covenants to make repairs. He also relieves himself of all liability for damage to persons or property resulting from any

cause whatsoever, including his own negligence. If the ceiling falls on a tenant, if escaping steam ruins his furniture, if he breaks a leg upon a defective stairway, he has no remedy against the landlord, although the latter may be protected against such risks by insurance. If the tenant uses the common storeroom for surplus belongings, the landlord assumes no responsibility for theft or destruction, despite the fact that the storeroom is under his control alone. Further, the lease usually contains innumerable provisions, as well as a lengthy list of rules and regulations, to insure that the tenant conducts himself in a model manner for the duration of the lease. But of course there are no provisions requiring the landlord to behave. If the tenant wishes to sublet his apartment, he finds he has no right to do so without the consent of the landlord, and this consent the landlord may refuse for any reason, such as disliking the color of the prospective newcomer's eyes. Most leases also contain provisions requiring the tenant to deposit with the landlord a month's rent as security, but such transactions have led to great evils, for under common law, the landlord may use such money in his own ventures, and when he goes bankrupt,

the tenant is left with no redress.

As for the adage that every man's home is his castle, this legal fiction is expressed in leases by a clause in which the landlord agrees that the tenant shall have a quiet enjoyment of the premises. But his possession is made neither quiet nor enjoyable by another clause, under which he allows the landlord's agents to show the premises to prospective tenants from two to four months before the expiration of his lease. Thus for several months his home is revealed in various states of disarray to groups of apartment tourists, accompanied by the superintendent as a guide. The tenant is sometimes surprised even in the sanctuary of his bathroom.

This viewing clause is always coupled with a provision for the automatic renewal of the lease if the tenant fails to give notice before the expiration of the same number of months. The necessity for making up his mind in the Spring as to whether it will be necessary for him to move in the Fall, imposes great hardship, for under the conditions of modern life, he often does not know what his future plans will be. The renewal clause, however, has at least one virtue—that of warning the tenant of his danger. But the result is

usually the same even in the absence of such a clause, for under common law a lease is automatically renewed if a tenant lingers even a day beyond the duration of his term. This remnant of feudal land law shows clearly that while a lease is now regarded as a contract, it still creates a "relation" between landlord and tenant, the incidents of which in no way depend upon the will of the parties. The automatic lease renewal is particularly harsh upon the tenant when it is remembered that at common law in many States, the landlord retains the medieval right of distress, enabling him to seize the tenant's belongings when the latter is in arrears in rent.

II

Of all standard lease forms, the most monstrous is that now widely employed in Manhattan—the form drawn by the Real Estate Board of New York City. Its provisions bespeak an almost incredible landlordly rapacity. Any *paterfamilias* who signs this document may think he is a lessee, but he is far more accurately described as a tenant at will—the sweet will of the landlord. Under law, the landlord can eject him at any time with impunity. The "lease" contains, of

course, the standard type of regulations, but it also includes many others, which make the average lease seem the very quintessence of mildness and generosity.

In the first place, the landlord is not obliged to give possession of the premises on the date of the commencement of the term if the tenant in possession holds over. The prospective tenant, who thus becomes an involuntary hold-over himself, is left entirely at the mercy of the two landlords. Moreover, the tenant agrees to make repairs in the apartment even when these become necessary through no fault of his own. He must at his own expense abate any violations charged against the premises under building or tenement laws. In case of fire, the landlord is obligated to repair the damages only if the fire has been caused without fault of the tenant, although the former is adequately covered by insurance. The landlord assumes no liability, and the tenant cannot claim a "constructive eviction" or ask an abatement of rent, by reason of the presence of vermin or insects in the building, the darkening or closing of windows, the making of extensive alterations necessitating cluttering up an apartment with pipes and building materials, or the interruption of heat, water supply,

or elevator service, unless caused by "gross negligence" of the landlord. Although the tenant is required to supply the landlord or his agents with a pass key to the apartment, the landlord assumes no liability for thefts. As for the viewing clause, it is no less than seven months!

The landlord may take possession of the apartment if it is vacated during the last month, even though the tenant has paid in full that month's rent. The landlord is constituted the judge of the objectionability of any tenant and may eject him by force, if necessary, after three days' notice. The landlord furthermore is entitled to be reimbursed for his attorney fees, brokerage expenses, and cost of redecoration if he has to evict the tenant or sue him for rent, although the tenant has no right to legal fees in the unlikely contingency that the landlord loses. Finally, the tenant waives in advance his constitutional right to a jury trial, thus losing his last chance to save himself by appealing to the judgment of his peers!

What can a tenant do when presented with such a lease? Obviously the first rule is to read it. If a landlord is rather anxious to rent an apartment, some concessions may be secured. Hence, a tenant

should never assume responsibility for damage not his fault. If he agrees to secure the landlord's consent to subletting, he should require that this consent be not unreasonably withheld. He should also insist that the landlord assume responsibility for injuries to persons or property when these result from defects in the premises which have been called to his attention. Above all, he should never, even if he has to live in a cave, sign such a document as the New York Real Estate Board lease. The use of this form has aroused even the conservative members of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, whose reform committee has drafted a substitute lease which at least approaches an ideal of fairness to both parties. A prospective tenant can at present do no better than to sign this form of lease.

If existing leases were always rigorously enforced, there would undoubtedly occur a tenant's revolt rivaling the peasant rebellions of the Middle Ages. But landlords, like other people, fortunately do not always take advantage of every legal right. The better type of real estate agent may be willing to accommodate a "deserving" tenant, realizing that good-will has substantial rental value. But not all realty owners are so farsighted.

Thus the various State legislatures have had to intervene.

Almost everywhere, tenants are protected to some extent under tenement house or multiple-dwelling laws which impose certain standards in the construction of buildings and require them to be maintained in good repair. In New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, it is a misdemeanor for a landlord to fail to supply heat, hot water, or elevator service when these *conforts modernes* are customary. In a few States, the terms of leases have been regulated. In Connecticut, Delaware, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, the automatic renewal by hold-over has been abolished, and in New York, a more limited type of statute has been enacted which requires the landlord to call the attention of the tenant to an automatic renewal clause before it may become operative. Another New York law makes a landlord a trustee of any deposit which he may take as security. A recent New York Legislature passed a bill rendering void all provisions of leases whereby tenants waived jury trial, but the undependable Governor Lehman saw fit to veto the bill. In Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, and New York, it is a misdemeanor for a landlord to refuse to rent an

apartment to a prospective tenant because he has children, but since the landlord may refuse to rent for any other reason, this kind of law is silly. A few statutes, however, have actually been enacted in favor of landlords. In Indiana, for example, it is a misdemeanor for a vacating tenant to neglect to return the keys to the landlord.

In the long run, however, the problem of leases can be solved no more by piecemeal legislation than by landlord good-will, or individual tenant resistance. The lot of the tenant becomes particularly unhappy in times of building shortage. At present there are innumerable signs of a coming boom in real estate which does not augur well for those who sign on the dotted line.

The lease, meanwhile, has become a standardized contract. But this standardization cannot safely be left to the realty interests. Ultimately it will have to be undertaken by public authority. Sentiment for the standardization of lease forms has already manifested itself among a considerable number of lawyers, and certain contracts in insurance and transportation deals have been standardized by legislative enactment. Certainly contracts for human habitation are no less vital.

BASEBALL AND BALLYHOO

By GERALD HOLLAND

THE realm of major league baseball is in many respects a dream world. To the young athlete who plays the game well and with *éclat*, it is a never-never land of lower berths and club cars, beauty-rest mattresses, awe-stricken barbers and adoring women, Florida sun-baths, thick steaks and *pie à la mode*, alert medicos and zealous trainers—topped each fortnight by a pay check for more money than exists in the workaday world of bookkeepers, soda-fountain attendants, and streetcar conductors. For the executives of organized baseball, there are, so to speak, no advertising budgets, no monthly statements to mail, no bad accounts to worry about; and there are free box seats available every afternoon at 3 o'clock, frequent conferences with the press, and not a little primping for photographers. The radio stations pay heavily for the privilege of broadcasting games from the park; the newspapers shower tons of free publicity on anyone remotely connected with the game, and are grieved only

when the opposition paper scores a news beat by announcing that there will be two Ladies' Days next week instead of one.

Yet baseball's executives do not consider this arrangement extraordinary. Occasionally a sports writer blurts: "Look at the free publicity we give you!" To this the devastating rejoinder is: "Yes, but where would *you* be if we didn't give you baseball to write about?" One club official, years back, was scarcely that tactful. "To hell with your publicity," he told a disgruntled baseball writer. "Don't print a damn line if you don't want to. If we're in last place, all the publicity in the world won't bring them in, and if we're on top, heaven and earth can't keep them out!"

And so, to any press agent who ever pasted a client's item from the want ad section upon a piece of large white paper, the little Utopia of Fandom would appear to offer poor pickings for the trade. Yet amazingly enough, this very institution, nourished for decades on free publicity, now actually hires

young men to look after press relations, serve beer to country editors, and spout intimate statistics about the athletes to anyone who will listen. The job of major league press agent was invented a few years ago by a St. Louis reporter named Gene Karst, later publicity director for the Cincinnati Reds. At the time, the Cardinals were beginning to add "farms" in the minor leagues and it was Mr. Karst's idea that complete records of ball players throughout the circuit should be kept on file at St. Louis headquarters for the convenience of sports writers. To clinch his job, he suggested that stories about the Cardinals be mailed to newspapers of nearby Missouri and Illinois towns. The idea, after considerable reception-room waiting, was accepted by Branch Rickey, vice president of the Cardinals, and Mr. Karst was given a desk. The publicity project began to enlarge, until at present the dwindling number of old-time baseball men regard the whole business of ballyhoo as a Frankenstein that will some day throttle the game itself to the din of a thousand fife-and-drum corps.

Yet the ballyhoo idea seems to be taking an unbreakable hold. After Mr. Karst first got his Vision, he himself was hired away from

the Cardinals to work under the ablest of the baseball showmen, Lawrence McPhail at Cincinnati. The St. Louis Browns long ago bought a mimeograph machine and established a free beer depot for writers and radio announcers, yet since the sale of the club last Fall, they now not only retain a publicity man but a theatrical exploitation agency and a ticket-selling expert. The Pittsburgh Pirates pay a press representative. The Chicago Cubs have added a promotion department, publish a miniature newspaper for the fans, and pay for radio time to re-enact each day's game after supper. The Cardinals, deprived of their Mr. Karst, have hired four men to replace him.

Ford Frick, youthful president of the National League, has advised every club to add what is technically known as an Information Department. He has indorsed night baseball and Summer suits for umpires; he has forbidden rival players to fraternize on the field lest spectators suspect that they do not hate each other adequately; he was quoted as saying of a post-game fist fight between Leon Durocher of the Cardinals and Casey Stengel of Brooklyn: "Good! I'd like to see more of that!" Mr. Frick, however, is not in sym-

pathy with out-and-out circus methods; he believes that honest baseball will do the trick.

In the circus department, Cincinnati has been the bell cow. It was Mr. McPhail, now out of baseball, who persuaded the National League to sanction seven night games in 1935 and seven more last season. The permission being dubiously granted, he installed a lighting plant, invested heavily in fireworks and union musicians, and, despite the fact that the Reds wallowed in sixth place, he drew 120,000 persons to the night games alone—more than some clubs drew at home all season.

All Mr. McPhail's evening performances were triumphs of showmanship, but that of July 31, 1935, was something to make the blood of Phineas T. Barnum run cold. The crowd, far too large for Cincinnati's park, overflowed onto the field long before the trio of umpires appeared as the band struck up *Three Blind Mice*. The spectators did not spare Cincinnati's beer while witnessing the preliminary skyrockets and foot races, and soon were ripe for anything, up to and including a lynching. They trampled over the infield, made great flourishes over imaginary curve balls on the pitch-

ing mound, and even invaded the dugouts to leer openly at the players. The bolder of them snatched baseballs out of the hands of the astounded athletes, many of whom were reduced to chasing small boys who had made off with their gloves.

Someone turned in a riot call and soon the police reserves roared up, only to whet further the crowd's appetite for a gaudy time. Meanwhile, a radical group of fans organized on the plaint that it was impossible to see the ball game. A few refunds were made and finally the players, picking their way through the beer bottles, took the field. It was a wild evening all around, climaxed in the eighth inning when a night-club dancer grabbed a bat and took a swing at one of "Daffy" Dean's pitches. She made the Wirephoto loop as a reward for her daring.

II

The other big league clubs, however, have been content to date with creating good will and enticing special groups of fans into the park by giving away an autographed ball here and there. The Cardinals preserve considerable dignity in their major league promotion stunts, but are receptive to

any stunt in their minor league branches. For instance, at the Huntington, West Virginia, camp of the organization, the services of Miss Sally Rand and her fan were enlisted to boost ticket sales. The ballyhoosers had Miss Rand photographed from a variety of angles while autographing a baseball, later presented to Huntington's "loudest rooter". The club also reported to St. Louis that considerable publicity had been obtained through a talented young frankfurter salesman called "Salty Dogs", and submitted the following sample from a local journal.

Salty Dogs puts in his appearance from the east-field wing, giving tongue to spine-pimpling screams, finishing off with that clucking laughter of Joe Penner. . . . In addition to his deep voice and clever imitations of Penner and Popeye, the duck-carrying newcomer can play the harmonica, dance, croon, and wisecrack.

John McGraw might have considered that irrelevant. In any case, the Cardinal farm at Hutchinson, Kansas, had conspicuous success with "Blue Shirt Night" on which all so attired were admitted for a reduced price. Hutchinson also produced "Family Night", when fathers, no matter how prolific, might bring the whole family for a flat charge of forty cents. There has been a "Beauty Contest Night", "Free Automobile Night," "May-

ors' Day", "Hotel Day", "Ladies' Day", and every other manner of day and night at various points on the Cardinal map.

All these new ideas were reported to St. Louis and published in the *St. Louis Cardinals' Publicity and Promotion Bulletin*, a house organ. Readers of the *Bulletin* were reminded, however, that the mere fact that a stunt was given space did not necessarily indicate approval by the home office. In that connection, Mr. L. H. Addington, publicity director for the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, was quoted. Said Mr. Addington:

While I realize the prime object of operating a ball club from the owner standpoint is to make money by attracting people through the gates, I cannot fully reconcile myself to the "greased pig" stunts used in some places as a side-line to baseball. However, there are any number of dignified promotional features that may be worked up.

Many baseball men do not approve of "greased pigs" and more than one looks askance at Joe Engel, who operates the Chattanooga farm of the Washington Senators. But Mr. Engel broke his league record for attendance in the Spring of 1936 with a crowd of more than 24,000. His added attractions were a free house and lot, and a free automobile. He gave two

automobiles away regularly every week. But for that matter, Indianapolis has a "Bank Night", and Dallas reluctantly abandoned a "Dividend Night" because the fans were not interested.

In St. Louis, the Cardinals' most successful promotion scheme consists in designating "Town Days". For instance, there might be a Nokomis, Illinois, Day on which, if Nokomis fans saw fit to buy at least 100 tickets in a bunch, their mayor would be suffered to throw out the first ball, shake various illustrious hands, and see his hometown band shuffle around the infield where shortly the heroes of the Cardinals would perform.

The Cards' routine publicity efforts call for regular dispatches to the country editors (who are supplied with passes on demand), railroad and bus line handbills, hotel lobby cards, radio programs (time free to the club), and distribution of the *Cardinal News*, a four-page collection of chit-chat and Did-You-Know-That-Rip-Collins-Is-Building-A-Fence-Around-His-House-With-Broken-Bats items.

In the field of good will, there are countless luncheons and church suppers always clamoring for personal appearances by the Cardinal stars and it is the duty of the publicity department to see that each

player does his share of these chores. Mr. Rickey and the club president, Sam Breadon, are insistent about this detail and it is not unusual for a ball player to be routed out at dawn of a Sunday morning for breakfast with the Holy Name Society. But Mr. Rickey asks no more of his players than he is willing to do himself. A tireless worker, he is never too weary to make a speech and is particularly adept at delivering pep talks liberally sprinkled with spotless anecdotes and adroit references to "the Great Scorer". He can reduce Rotarians, Optimists, and Lions Clubs to tears in four minutes by the clock, attaining himself an advanced state of nervous prostration at the same time.

As far as promotion goes, though, the Cardinals, as presently constituted, need very little of it. In Dizzy and Paul Dean, Pepper Martin, and a few others, the owners have a crew that can't be kept out of the headlines. On a trip to the East in 1936, Dizzy, Martin, and Heinie Schuble purchased workmen's overalls and caps and strutted through the lobby of the Bellevue-Stratford in Philadelphia, loudly planning drastic alterations to that staid hostelry. A little later in New York, Paul Dean granted a widely-printed interview

in which he denounced baseball generally because he had been denied two passes for a new friend who had presented him with a harmonica. Both Dizzy and Paul once tore up their uniforms and went on strike, Dizzy announcing his intention of opening a furniture store across the street from the automobile agency operated by the team's owner, Mr. Breadon. Just the other day, the entire Cardinal team, led by Dean, assaulted two newspapermen because the latter, covering the Spring training grind in Florida, did not write to their satisfaction.

No team in either league enjoys better press relations than the St. Louis Browns, even if the attendance figures do prove that the most enthusiastic publicity will not make a tail-end club pull money at the gate. The reason for the Browns' fine press is Rogers Hornsby, a veritable Edward L. Bernays at the business. Mr. Hornsby is universally liked by reporters because he does not evade their questions. If a query calls for a direct answer, the articulate Rogers will deliver the order. It may strike the layman as strange that this straightforwardness should be so rare in a baseball man who usually has nothing more important to conceal than the prog-

ress of a carbuncle on his star pitcher's posterior. Yet it is a fact that among countless managers and club officials, a great secrecy is made to shroud the slightest news.

Mr. Hornsby's wide friendship among the sports writers is further accounted for by the fact that he has a code of honor of his own fabrication and a sense of humor of his own invention, both extremely sound. He is as skillful a baseball strategist as he was a player and he does not pretend to be learned in other fields. He has a good-humored contempt for college graduates, *per se*, but does not hold the values of a higher education against a player while in uniform. The Rajah does not drink, but will pay for as many as his guest can hold and will accept confidences as a father confessor.

As a sample contrast to the Hornsby type, there is Bill Terry, hard-working and conscientious manager of the New York Giants, who apparently cannot open his mouth without thrusting a No. 11 into it. Terry's managerial career has been one long succession of unfortunate utterances, but it was an early out-of-hand remark about "\$35-a-week sports writers" that got him the gong for keeps. Since then, he has been quoted with scrupulous accuracy and that, consider-

ing Mr. Terry's failing, is an awful revenge. His classic inquiry, "Is Brooklyn still in the league?" made him the foremost candidate for lynching in Flatbush and more than satisfied the outraged honor of the press. Later on, Bill made reluctant advances to the newspaper boys, but the atmosphere at his cocktail parties was as cool as the shakers.

All this aside, it will remain true that the money-making teams will always be those which win more often than they lose. But the new concern of baseball for press and public is acknowledged generally as a wholesome symptom. Baseball writers themselves have received most of the innovations cordially, although they regard some forms of the new promotion with wry faces. For one thing, they resent

any corruption of the game itself; for another, they are dead set against handouts, preferring to get their facts direct from the heroes.

Thus, the press agents in baseball are appreciated mainly by the country editors who formerly were treated like poor relations, but now are frequently amazed to find themselves violently shaken by the hand, allotted a bottle of three per cent beer, and, in isolated cases, ushered into the presence of a third-string utility outfielder or some comparable celebrity.

Whatever the worth of it all, baseball is currently enjoying excellent business in major and minor leagues. In fact, it appears that the problem may some day be not the lack of patronage but the lack of enough young men with a talent for actually playing the game.



ITINERANT BIRD

BY WITTER BYNNER

PLEASE tell me, bird,
Since you have wings,
And an undeterred
Small bill that sings,
Do you know well
Some simple truth,

Which merely to tell
Renews your youth?
Or must you chatter,
As age comes on,
Trying to scatter
Oblivion?

EDITORIAL

America's Pampered Parasites

As that process so brilliantly described by Ortega y Gasset as the Revolt of the Masses gathers momentum, both here and abroad, the embattled hooligans of the dictatorship countries present us with a revealing spectacle of what the mob-man really aspires to be—a bully's bully. This is the derisive response of the masses to the ideals of the very system of Liberalism which has brought them to the foreground. The basic concepts of democracy were essentially aristocratic in their sense of self-respect and liberty, pearls confidingly cast before swine by the finest minds of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; but these minds could not foresee the rise of the twentieth-century barbarians, whose aim is to destroy all that civilization has been slowly building up since the Renaissance. As Ortega points out, the essential feature of the mass revolt is parasitism. The mob-man swarms everywhere, making incessant demands upon a culture to which he contributes nothing and which is

gradually being undermined by his aimless exactions. One of his chief illusions is that the State Owes Him a Living.

It is generally conceded that the very nature of the democratic nations handicaps them in dealing with the regimented mobocracy of the dictatorships. The Liberal tradition of free speech and individualism thus plays into the hands of the deadliest enemies of freedom. It is not so generally recognized that this same tradition betrays democracies into the hands of their so-called friends, who are always eager to profit by the generosity of free institutions, but never to contribute to them. The parasitic mob-man not only claims that the State owes him a living, but also that the community owes him education and recreation, for which he himself refuses to pay. The evils of popular education are abundantly evident, but the parasitism of the semi-literate population is so widespread and deeply rooted that most of us are unaware of its ramifications.

It is not our purpose here to discuss graft in general, or the innumerable disbursements made for political purposes at the public expense. Our concern is with the routine forms of democratic pampering, the beneficiaries of which are actually unconscious of the parasitical position in which they place themselves, a position for which there is no warrant in their actual financial circumstances. More particularly, we are concerned with the encouragement of parasites amongst those sections of the community which are sentimentally credited with intellectual aspirations placing them in a specially deserving category.

Custom and tradition have combined to evolve a dogma which is as open to challenge as any other dogma based upon mere blind adherence to doctrine. Is every American citizen entitled to "free" education? Does the concept of popular education, originally a generous gesture, extend to the provision of libraries, museums, picture galleries, and musical entertainment to people who are not equipped by nature to appreciate any of these things, and who are demonstrably in a position to pay for such privileges if they really want them? Is it not one thing to recognize that a gifted individ-

ual without resources should be helped, and quite another to assume that such resources, if placed at the disposal of everybody, will produce an indefinite number of gifted individuals? The American dogma seems to be an assertion of the latter theory, a theory not only untenable, but daily disproved by the obvious facts of common experience. The old adage, God helps those who help themselves, has been replaced by the notion that we must help people to what they do not want, while they help themselves to everything they can get.

The wholesale education subsidy appeals to our unscrupulously sentimental demagogues, whose eyes and ears are eternally directed to the electorate. Their concern is not with education as such, with the fate of those who are being educated into a world which has no room for them, or with the relatively rare cases where young men and women of first-rate ability are deprived through poverty of the opportunity to prove their worth. Their concern is with voters, and voters are notoriously regarded by politicians as people who, like those they vote for, want as much as they possibly can get for nothing. Since arrangements have not been made to provide the electorate with "free" cars, radios, movie

tickets, and ice cream — the things which they crave so much that they actually spend money on them — “free” education and “free” libraries are offered instead. The mob is thereby enabled to save an expense which it has no genuine desire to incur, and to enjoy parasitically institutions which were never intended for its kind.

There would be a surprising and welcome diminution in the number of shyster lawyers, adjusters and collectors, ambulance chasers, and other varieties of vermin created by popular institutions of so-called “higher” learning, if some tests as to character, intellectual qualifications, and capacity to pay were first made, before we so generously proffered this “free” education, which does not educate more than a fraction of its beneficiaries, and is free only insofar as it saddles the rest of us with the cost thereof. Its expense to the community, however, is far greater than the cost of tuition, for great numbers of these students, uncouth, ill-mannered, and packed with half-baked knowledge, are to be found in the lower ranks of the careers and professions, a menace and a disgrace to the civilized elements in them. They become the intellectual counterpart of the gangsters, with whom their lot, in

so many cases, is finally and inevitably cast. Something they did not deserve and were not qualified to use was given to them for nothing, so they took it.

II

If free movies have not yet been provided for the delectation of the voters and their offspring, a step has been taken in that direction. The public libraries supply most of the movie magazines, at the expense of the taxpayer. Appropriations for worthwhile books may be cut, salaries reduced, librarians dismissed, but the sacred right of the people to be furnished with its natural pabulum cannot be tampered with. Periodical departments are not limited to the kind of publications which educated readers might wish to consult, nor is piffling fiction eliminated to make way for such important books as even a limited budget might include, because of this necessity of pandering to the demands of the parasites who live on public libraries. Like the students at the “free” colleges, the majority of these parasites could easily buy, or procure from a rental library, the kind of printed matter which they mistake for literature. Both students and book-borrowers are simply people

who hate to give a cent toward the support of culture in any form, yet will spend \$4.40 for a theater seat while waiting their turn to get a greasy copy of some half-forgotten best-seller out of the public library.

So confused is public opinion about this issue that, in times of financial stress, when curtailment becomes necessary, everybody is called upon to help, except the beneficiaries of the institutions in question. Thus, when the New York Public Library was picketed because of the dismissal of members of the staff and reductions in salary, it was never suggested that, if the holders of library cards had all been charged a nominal sum for the privilege and if a fee of five cents were paid at a turnstile by everyone entering the reference rooms, the reduced budget could very helpfully have been augmented. Since the Library stands at the disposal of "devoted" scholars and "booklovers", surely they would not begrudge a small contribution after all these years of free service of every kind? Had the test been made, it would have been interesting to see how far the grateful patrons responded and how quickly the parasites disappeared. Then we should have had a measure of the exact extent to which

these "free, democratic institutions" are actually appreciated by those upon whom they are thrust with such vociferous generosity.

Some years ago, Mr. R. L. Duffus delved into this devious subject and produced some facts¹ which were as incontrovertible as they were damaging to the legend of this democratic yearning for literature and education. The annual consumption per person of books in this country was two volumes. The colossal amount expended by the citizenry for the privilege of improving their minds averaged thirty-two cents a year per person. However, \$3,000,000,000 was the yearly expenditure on automobiles, and 115,000,000 people weekly attended the movies, in order to see such noble spectacles as Mr. and Mrs. Irving Thalberg — to quote a recent advertisement — giving *Romeo and Juliet* "to posterity", a job at which Shakespeare apparently failed. The undaunted Mr. Duffus entered into many refined calculations, which can best be briefly summarized by saying that eleven to twenty-eight times more is spent each year on soft drinks, radios, candy, and greeting-cards than on books. The mere enumeration of these predilections is an in-

¹ *Books: Their Place in a Democracy*, by Robert L. Duffus. Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

dication of the type of purchaser. It is the type that ruthlessly exploits "free" libraries and "free" colleges, always willing to have others pay for what would at once be rejected, as answering no urgent personal need, if offered on a modest contributory basis.

With certain modifications, the principle herein suggested for the public libraries might be applied to museums and picture galleries. The number of days when admission is free should be limited. This would enable people who really want to make serious use of these institutions to visit them on the days, or during the hours, when there is a small charge for admission. The mobs of gapers who meander aimlessly about museums and galleries are there for no other purpose than to kill time by getting for nothing something which they do not understand. The most that they ever grasp is that they are seeing free of charge a picture which cost the donor a small fortune, or that they can gaze uncomprehendingly at some reconstruction of antiquity which was made possible only by capitalist subsidies to scholars and scientists who, according to the mob's standards, were fools to waste their time excavating in deserts when they could have made big money

by going into some "practical" line of business.

Museums and picture galleries should be reserved five days a week for those who wish to use them in peace and are willing to pay a small fee. After all, every Tom, Dick, and Harry is not allowed to clutter up the British Museum Reading Room, but many thousands of poor students have been supplied with tickets, including that grateful friend of British capitalist government, Karl Marx. As usual, however, appropriations for museum salaries, accessions, and upkeep have been cut during the Depression, men thrown out of work to which they have devoted a lifetime, but not a cent in relief of these conditions has been offered by or exacted from those who profit allegedly by the "free" facilities provided.

When the masses get their music free of charge, as over the radio, the type of entertainment nearest to their heart's desire is only too amply demonstrated by the sponsored programs — sponsored, that is to say, not by philanthropic idealists or "democratic" sentimentalists, but by hardboiled businessmen who know exactly what the public wants because they have studied its real tastes as measured by willingness to pay. If an annual license

fee were charged for every radio set in use, the most moronic of all American audiences might be taught an elementary lesson — that the radio is no more “free” than the city colleges and schools, and that they ought to contribute to the upkeep of perhaps the most important medium of public instruction and entertainment in the world today. The fees would provide a fund from which unsponsored programs for civilized listeners might be provided, programs, in other words, that the citizens themselves have paid for, and which might take cognizance of the existence of the higher levels of American intelligence. After all, it is always open to the morons to skip what is beyond them, without disturbing others who want to listen, which is surely fairer than allowing them to overrun all public institutions.

The radio fans undoubtedly think that they are “entitled” to listen-in without a license, just as they imagine that the cities “owe” them an education, free reading matter, and the facilities provided by various public institutions. But the spread of education has long since ceased to be an unmixed blessing, so spurious have been the results achieved. In fact, the rapid

growth of literate illiteracy is an undiluted evil, which is fostered by the rise, in the relation of cause and effect, of all those media of public befuddlement from which cultivated men and women are almost completely excluded. It is precisely these media, the cheap press, the radio, the movies, which receive the enthusiastic support of the semi-educated millions, who never begrudge the money wasted upon them and are incapable of criticizing them. And it is precisely this public which, confusing education with instruction, insists upon its right to be “educated” — God save the mark! — at the public expense, and consistently refuses to contribute, directly or indirectly, to the upkeep of intellectual civilization. In other words, the minority is compelled to subsidize vandalism by enabling the deadly enemies of all spiritual and superior values to acquire the destructive weapons of semi-education without even the slightest sacrifice on their own part.

In other days, when barbarians have threatened civilizations, the latter have gone down fighting, even if defeated. Nowadays, apparently, not enough can be done for the barbarians by their intended victims.

AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

REMARKABLE fortitude is shown by a siren of the screen, as revealed by Hollywood *Talkie-Talk*:

Elizabeth Allan recently hired a publicity agent, but warned him against publicizing her private life.

SWAMI Baird T. Spalding discusses the age of miracles in the pages of *Mind Magazine*:

Among the Sioux Indians, one who is to become a medicine man . . . must walk slowly before the three best marksmen of the tribe, who shoot at him with .44 caliber rifles. I have seen Colonel Newell load these rifles myself, and have one of the bullets that flattened against a medicine man's body.

CONNECTICUT

THE solons at Hartford thwart a foul conspiracy, as reported by the alert Norwich *Evening Record*:

Among the bills rejected by the State Assembly yesterday was one providing for sterilization of all members of the House and Senate who advocate birth control.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CONVINCING proof of the Red Menace in the nation's capital, as

documented by the Associated Press:

Representative Virginia E. Jenckes, Democrat of Indiana, declared today that the new Federal buildings in Washington bore a "marked similarity" to the buildings in Moscow's Red Square.

"This is a real attempt by the propagandists," she said.

GEORGIA

UNFORTUNATE typographical error slips into the pages of the distinguished *Southeast Georgian* of Kingsland:

The Kingsland Garden Club will meet Tuesday afternoon at 3.30 o'clock at the home of Mrs. Mose Edenfield. Anyone having pants to exchange may do so at this time. Quite a few were exchanged at the last meeting.

ILLINOIS

DEFINITE sign of Recovery is chronicled by the esteemed Chicago *Tribune*:

Every morning since the weather has turned cold, a bull terrier wearing a mink coat is to be seen on Lake Shore Drive. The coat was tailored for him by one of Chicago's leading furriers and given to him for a Christmas present.

KANSAS

A POSSIBLE successor to the late Thomas A. Edison is uncovered by an alert reporter for the *Lawrence Journal World*:

Schiller Shore, inventor, is out with a new type ear muff. Shore complains that heretofore manufacturers have failed to put heating units into ear-pads. He has his new muffs lined with sandpaper and as the paper rubs on the ears, it starts circulation and therefore brings warmth.

KENTUCKY

GROWTH of fraternal spirit in the Blue Grass region, as revealed in the Pikeville *Union Advocate*:

BITE INTO THIS ONE,
MR. LUCAS

The Union Advocate,
Pikeville, Ky.

Dear Sir:

I wish to reply to Mr. Lucas.

"My teeth are now safe."

I admit that I had rented my teeth to Mr. Geo. Owens, but on learning that Mr. John Lucas wanted to rent them I had told Mr. Owens to say he had lost them. Knowing that Mr. Lucas was going to Harlan County for a few days, I was afraid for the safety of my teeth.

Mr. Lucas is a very good friend of mine and I will gladly rent my false teeth to him anytime he will assure me he will not leave this county.

Very truly yours,

CLAY JOHNSON

MASSACHUSETTS

CONVINCING bit of medico-theological dogma, as offered in the schol-

arly pages of the *Christian Science Sentinel*:

I have found Christian Science as effective with animals as with people. While aboard ship a cat appeared to have what would generally be called a fit. It acted as if blind, and ran around crying and bumping into things. I took it into my quarters and read from *Science and Health*, just as if I were reading to some individual, and in a few minutes it quieted down and went to sleep. In a couple of hours it awakened and was all right. After that it kept close to me whenever possible.

NEW YORK

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE fashion note from the tabloid pages of Manhattan's *Daily News*:

Let dangling charms reveal your social security number, if you would wear new and novel charm bracelet. Just saw a beauty. Platinum chain, with first numbers outlined in rubies, second group in diamonds, and third in sapphires, lending patriotic note as well. May be fashioned in enamel.

THE Truth-in-Advertising campaign reaches a new high in the public notice columns of the *Herald Tribune*:

Tumble-down house on hilltop for sale in Litchfield Hills, Connecticut. Two miles from town. No babbling brook. Extensive grounds for pushing lawnmower. Bad golf, shooting, fishing, etc. Twelve acres inclosed by horse fence adjoining hunt club. Dump near house with skunks, rabbits, and field mice rattling around. Approximately thirty acres apple trees.

Oil burner. Domestic problems terrible. Price, \$29,000.

NORTH CAROLINA

CASH value of culture in Asheville, as revealed in the want-ad section of the *Citizen-Times*:

REFINED white woman to cook and keep house. Salary two dollars week.

CONTRIBUTION to the art of literary criticism south of the Potomac, from the columns of the learned *Pender County News*:

"GONE WITH THE WIND"

A Reader's Opinion of the Much Read and Discussed Book—By Miss Mattie Bloodworth of Burgaw, N. C.

I have been asked for my opinion of the much read and much advertised book, *Gone With The Wind*, by Margaret Mitchell, a story of the Civil War and days of Reconstruction.

First, I wish to say that I am not a critic, and that I do not feel capable of judging or criticizing a volume so widely read and the varied opinions, so numerous, one hesitates to say what one feels or thinks. Anyway, I think it too voluminous, though written in a most descriptive and rather interesting manner, I do feel, that in the portrayal of Scarlett O'Hara we have a modern Woman of today, and not a woman of the Civil War days or a woman who represented from any angle a typical Southern woman.

According to what we have learned from the older generation, most of whom have passed on, and from our parents and grandparents relative to Civil War days, the trials and tribulations, and of the precocious Southern girls, who were demure and most refined, and whose chaperone accom-

panied them hither and yon, regardless of beau brummel, it is most likely a girl of Scarlett O'Hara's character would have been completely ostracized from any Southern Society. You talk about high-hatters, the noses of some of these neighbors would have been high in the air, and the old aristocratic women of that period were not the cosmopolitan women of today who tolerate social indiscretions. Few Southern women of that age would have been such a husband-getter. That seems more of the present-day doings. Too, reverence was instilled into most Southern girls and were generally so devout that the expression God's Nightgown, even though an Irish saying, would have been considered most sacrilegious, while Scarlett's chicanery in business as well as in marital affairs convinces one of her irresponsible nature. History will tell you that those who settled our borders or Eastern shores before the Revolution were high-class, well-educated, and who possessed wonderful libraries, their tenants perhaps might have been among the plebeians as represented by Scarlett O'Hara.

Referring to the Reconstruction period which was most trying and so unfair, would it not have been more consistent to let bygones rest in oblivion? . . .

I have been told that this book has been selected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy as the book of the year. Really, I cannot understand how an organization which represents high standards could make a selection for the future generation whose principal characters Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett with their immoral reputations could from any standpoint, even though a well-written book, be a criterion.

This book certainly gives youth the wrong impression of that period and I feel proud of the fact that it has

been rejected by the Library of the Burgaw High School.

IN OTHER NEW UTOPIAS AUSTRALIA

NOTE on the he-man religion of the Antipodes, as reported by the *Hongkong Telegraph*:

"If Christ came to Sydney today," said the Rev. T. McVittie, Moderator of the Sydney Presbytery (according to *Reuter*), "he would be on 'the Hill' at cricket matches driving home the lessons of the game.

"One can imagine Christ reminding the crowd that Satan was the deadliest and most determined googly bowler of all time."

ENGLAND

WHIMSY in the insect world, as vouched for by a subscriber to the *London Observer*:

One sunny day last week, I was sitting by the open window, indolently listening to the wireless, which was playing light dance music, when I became aware of a dance being performed by a feathery little fly in the bright sunshine. Up and down, backwards and forwards, round and round, faster and slower, higher and lower, swinging and swaying the little dancer went, in perfect time, perfect rhythm, describing almost the movements of a conductor's baton, but always keeping approximately at a height of four feet from the ground. For about five minutes I watched this fascinating dance, wondering at the

beauty of the movement, the fly rising and falling with the music, higher and higher, lower, lower, slower. As the music fell and ceased the little dancer dropped to the ground, lost to my sight.

Mr. David Garnett, one of the Empire's leading Liberals, makes a solemn pronouncement in the pages of the erudite *New Statesman and Nation*:

Every bottle of hock or chianti that we drink is helping to provide the arms which are being used to slaughter the Spanish people today, or which are likely to be used against the Czechs, the Russians, the French, and ourselves in the near future. On the other hand, every bottle of burgundy we drink makes a Fascist conspiracy more improbable in France and France herself more dangerous to attack.

JAPAN

THE Tourist Industry Board issues profound rules of conduct for care-free hotel maids:

Don't ask a foreigner's age unless you absolutely must.
Light pranks add zest to your services, but don't pull the customer's ears.
Don't go as far as the door when you direct foreigners to the lavatory.
Don't go into the bathroom when foreigners are bathing to ask whether the temperature of the water is right or to help them wash themselves.
To foreign ladies, large napkins should be offered to hide their knees when sitting.

THE BOOK PREVIEW

BLOOD ON THE MOON¹

BY LINTON WELLS

Earthquake

I HAD been in Japan only a few days when the greatest natural disaster known to modern times occurred. On Saturday, September 1, 1923, it was hot and deadly still. "Earthquake weather", opined the experts. I sat down to an early lunch preparatory to leaving for a week-end at Karizawa. My maid placed a cup of broth before me and was about to serve the crackers when the house began to sway. The time, as later stated officially, was 11.57 A.M. First there was a gentle lateral motion, but with the passing seconds its intensity increased until I felt as though I were sitting on one of those trick amusement-park devices which clatter back and forth and jar the daylighters out of you. The *ama-san* cried "*Jūshin!*" and padded hastily toward the kitchen below, where her chef-husband and baby were.

I had never feared earthquakes in other parts of the world and even had laughed when people ran as the first earth-quiver was felt. But now, for some unaccountable reason, I was stricken by an overwhelming terror. It wasn't more than fifty feet from the dining-room, through the living-room, hallway, and door, to safety; but before I could reach it, the building was swaying and quivering so violently that I kept my balance only with difficulty. And then, as I was reaching for the doorknob, there was a violent shock from beneath me. The structure began to collapse and topple and I was thrown to the floor in a shower of plaster and laths and wooden beams. As I passed out from a blow on the head, my last thought was, "I hope it doesn't catch fire."

When I regained consciousness a short time later, it was to hear frenzied people howling and wailing above a tremendous rumbling. Then I realized that whatever I was lying on in the semi-darkness was vibrating. And after that I became acutely aware of sharp pains in the region of my left ankle, a pressure against the soreness in my chest, a splitting headache, and the fact that I was afraid. Light was filtering through apertures around me and I could see that I was in a little cave which had been formed by the doorway

¹ Excerpts from *Blood on the Moon*, to be published this month by Houghton Mifflin.

supports and crossed beams. On my chest was part of the ceiling. Fingering it cautiously and determining that it could be moved, I eased myself out from under it. The effort was torture, and I surmised rightly that I had a few fractured ribs — fortunately only two, as the doctor found out later. I batted my head a few times with my fists and dissipated the recurring blur before my eyes, then examined my ankle. It required no expert to diagnose it as broken. Essaying further experiment I learned that I could crawl, and as there was a small opening through the debris a half-dozen feet away, I dragged myself toward it. On the way my stomach flopped over and I threw up because I was still scared.

Inspired by mental urgings to “get into the open and make it snappy”, I pulled myself to and through the hole and for a few moments drank in the bright sunlight on the hillside. Glancing upward I saw the road just overhead and, taking a deep breath, struggled to it, dizzy with the exertion.

Perhaps it was five minutes later that I began to take notice of things again. The earth was shaking under me, thick clouds of smoke were darkening the blue sky, and the cries of the frightened and wounded created a bedlam. From my point of vantage on the hillside I was able to gaze down upon a part of the Azabu district and noted that a good portion of it had been razed. I could see crazed citizens milling around and tearing frantically at wreckage. Immediately below me were the ruins of my house. I saw the cook clasping his baby and staring bewilderedly at what had once been his home. I wondered what had become of his wife, my *ama-san*, and tried to attract his attention, but it hurt so much I gave it up. I learned later that he had escaped into the open with the baby, but she had been caught under the debris and killed.

Manifestly a terrible calamity had occurred, but how great I had no way of telling. It was my job to get on my feet and hustle around for details so I could put a story on the cable. I struggled to a standing position on one foot, and then another shock came and threw me to the ground. A feeling of futility took possession of me and I cursed my helplessness. Being in an earthquake is like being unarmed and unprotected in an aerial bombardment. You grow furious over your inability to fight back. I made two more attempts to get up and hop before I decided to crawl toward Hibiya Park, a mile distant, and possibly to the Imperial Hotel — if it still was in existence. If it wasn't, then the park would provide a reasonably safe haven from the fire.

I dragged myself along the dusty road until the legs of my trousers were worn away and my knees were bleeding. My hands were protected by a pair of wooden Japanese *getas* — shoes — which had been abandoned by some hapless Nipponese. Strength returned at times and then I would struggle erect and hop along, holding onto the sides of buildings or telephone poles.

The area was a shambles. People of both sexes and all ages were digging in the ruins of buildings, striving to rescue someone or looting, I didn't know which — or care. There were dead people everywhere. Some horribly crushed, others with grotesque looks on their battered faces. The roadside was cluttered with hundreds who moaned dazedly and nursed their injuries. Rickshas were turned over in the street, passengers and pullers alike dead from heads bashed in by falling tiles. Nobody paid me any attention; they had troubles enough of their own. There were no lights except candle-lanterns which flickered like fireflies and the crimson sky distorted by billowing smoke rising from those sections of town which were aflame. Thousands were trapped in these areas and roasted alive.

There is a limit to physical endurance, and mine had been reached when I buried my face in the grass at Hibiya Park. I fell asleep, railing against my inability to cover what obviously was a great story. It was nearly dawn when I awoke. My injuries were aching frightfully and I was thirsty. The heavens still reflected the fires raging throughout the city and my companions in misfortune now were sleeping fretfully or staring apathetically into space. Hysteria had given way to exhaustion and resignation.

It was less than half a mile to the Imperial Hotel, where I could get details as to what had happened and perhaps send off some stories and obtain medical attention. It required fifteen minutes of pleading before I could persuade four Japanese to carry me there. After several pauses and to the accompaniment of much panting and grunting, they deposited me in the lobby of that architectural monstrosity known as the Imperial Hotel. Designed by the American, Frank Lloyd Wright, to withstand all earthquakes, and ridiculed by architects throughout the world, it was one of the few structures in the stricken area which was undamaged.

The place was little less than a madhouse. It was jammed with haggard foreigners, better-class Japanese, and servants. Whenever one of the four hundred-odd temblors which jolted the city over a period of forty-eight hours caused the building to rock on the shock-absorbing rollers upon which its foundation rested, there would be an exodus from the building. I didn't mind, for in this way I got a seat. Everybody was incoherent and had a wild story to tell, but no one had any idea as to the extent of the catastrophe. Several days were to elapse before the full horror of it was impressed upon us. Then we were to learn that half of Tokyo had been destroyed, and Yokohama and hundreds of villages wiped out completely; that several hundred thousand people were dead, more injured, and billions of dollars' worth of property laid to waste. The earthquake shocks took their toll, but fire did the most damage.

I soon determined that there was no mechanical contact with the outside world. My more fortunate confrères had found that out immediately after the first big tremor. When they realized that all railroads leading from Tokyo were out of commission and that the roads were so blocked by debris as to make vehicular traffic impossible, they had put their legs into action in attempts to get through to Yokohama and communication facilities. Upon reaching the seaport early the following morning, after some ghastly experiences, they found it in ruins, but there were a few ships in the harbor with wireless sets and soon the world was shocked by their first brief, tragic dispatches.

Foreign nations and the Red Cross began to rush assistance to the stricken Japanese and there was a universal clamor for news of friends and relatives in the devastated areas. Weeks passed before the register of foreign casualties was reasonably accurate. I was listed as missing and probably dead in the early reports, and here is a curious story:

When the earthquake happened, my mother was asleep in Hollywood, California. My father bears witness to the fact that she awakened and told him I had been injured. She didn't know how or to what extent, but she knew something had happened to me. Dad told her she had been dreaming and to go back to sleep and forget it. News of the earthquake came the next day and she was able to say, "I told you something had happened." Later, when my name appeared among those missing and probably dead, she refused to believe it. "He's only been injured," she insisted. Five days afterward she received word from me that I was safe.

Moscow

In the Fall of 1932 there came a cable from Archie Parke, my foreign news editor in New York. It read:

"How would you like to go to Moscow for a year or two?"

Now I considered — and still regard — Soviet Russia as being the most interesting place on the face of this globe for a newspaperman. There 170,000,000 people representing 156 nationalities are attempting a new experiment in government — the greatest in history. Without hesitation I telegraphed Parke:

"When do you want me to leave?"

His reply came the same evening:

"As soon as you can get visas."

The Soviet Foreign Office authorized the necessary permission in four days, and a week later I was back in Moscow. . . .

The attitude of the average home-office editorial employee toward men oc-

cupping foreign billets is: "Pretty soft for you! Knocking around all over the world with a fat expense account and little or no interference from anyone. Making your own hours and assignments and getting paid Big Money. Pretty soft!"

These lads at home, working from forty to fifty-four hours a week, ignore the fact that a reporter laboring abroad is on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Competition is too keen to permit him to relax his vigilance a single instant, otherwise he's likely to find himself scooped and the recipient of a sarcastic message from the boss demanding to know if he's asleep, drunk, or unable to recognize news when it's thrust in front of his eyes.

Sometime during 1933, I jotted down this schedule. It gives the routine of my life in Moscow (endless hours at airports covering Stratostat ascents, 'round-the-world races, proletariat conventions, etc., are not included).

A.M.

- 8.30 Reveille. Russian masseur arrives to pound life into the aging body until
- 9.00 Mikhailoff (my secretary) puts in an appearance with the thirty-odd Russian newspapers and magazines which we must read daily.
- 9.15 Masseur collects his dollar and departs happily, leaving me to shave, bathe, and otherwise stimulate the tired carcass with cigarettes and strong coffee, while Mikhailoff is marking stories for my consideration.
- 10.00 I glean from said items facts worthy of being checked up and molded into a story, write a piece, and send Mikhailoff off to censor with it in time to catch the first editions of the afternoon American papers. (When it is noon in Moscow it is 4 A.M. in New York and transmission time is about two hours.)

P.M.

- Noon I have been tapping my private news sources. I devote an hour to extra-journalistic duties as an American Consular Representative (this was before Recognition), striving to assist indigent Americans either to eat, obtain work, or get out of the country; write another letter to Stalin asking for an interview; argue with one of a dozen people over the privilege of garaging my car; issue orders to my staff of four servants; fight with the apartment-house committee over lack of heat, hot water, and repairs, and invasion of bedbugs.
- 1.30 I depart for luncheon at some Embassy or Legation (about thrice weekly), invaluable for its contacts and opportunity to exchange

- 3.30 information. Other days, I entertain visiting firemen, most of them friends of and bearing letters from the home office and desirous of learning all about Soviet Russia in four days.
- 3.30 This period is devoted to receiving a reprimand from the censor; to protesting against non-delivery of telegrams and mail, lack of
- 5.00 gas or electricity, failure of telephone, destructive rats and annoying fleas; trying to dig data out of government departments, interview somebody, or inspect something — all pretty much wasted effort.
- 5.00 And this to scavenging around the hotels or the homes of colleagues and other foreign residents in the hope of picking up a
- 8.00 scrap or two of news.
- 8.00 Two or three nights a week I have dinner at some Embassy or to Legation, followed by pro and con arguments regarding almost
- 11.00 every subject under the sun, then bridge; invariably, in the excitement of seven spades, doubled and redoubled, I am called to the telephone to have a cable from the home office read by one of the servants at home, then hurry off at 10.15 to say good-bye to some personage departing from Alexandria Station. On other nights there generally is a private party at my own or someone else's home or at the Metropole, with the same interruptions.
- 11.30 Is spent in the press room of the Foreign Office translating communiqués which could just as easily have been issued twelve
- 2.00 hours before, then whipping their contents into a story for the or morning papers, arguing with the censor over the point of view
- 3.30 from which it has been written, and depositing it at the post-office.
- A.M.
- Then A few drinks at the Metropole and then to bed, to be awakened until every half-hour or so by the telegraph operator reading a cable
- 8.00 from the office ordering me to "Get Stalin reaction" on something or other, or confirm the fact that Japan or Germany has declared war against the USSR or a brainstorm equally silly.
- A.M.

The day of my arrival in Moscow I went to the Narkomindel (Foreign Office) and presented my credentials to the chief of the Information Section — a little Jew named Constantin Umansky. He was short of stature, had rather bushy black hair, and peered suspiciously upon the world through thick-lensed, shell-rim glasses. He was only about twenty-six, a mass of nerves and energy, and at one time had been a newspaperman. Besides his native Russian, he spoke excellent English, French, and German.

After welcoming me to my new post, Umansky proceeded to explain the operation of Soviet censorship: No story could be sent out of the USSR — by cable, telephone, post, or courier — until it had been approved by him or one of his three assistants. Thereafter, it could be filed at the telegraph office with assurance that it would be dispatched to its destination. Compare this with the censorship arrangement in effect in many other countries, including Germany, Italy, Japan, and even France. There the correspondent files his story at the cable office and never learns what happens to it — not, at least, until several weeks have elapsed and he sees it published in one of his papers. Not infrequently the printed version is quite inaccurate, thanks to the lacerating hand of a conscientious censor.

I told Umansky politely that, while the rules of his bureau were quite clear, I wanted him to understand my position: My office had sent me to the USSR to report news as I found it, which was precisely what I intended doing.

"There is just one promise I can make you, Mr. Umansky," I said, "and that is this: I shall never, under any circumstances, send out of this country an unsupported rumor. In other words, everything my organizations receive from me will be supported by incontrovertible fact. Now, I shall abide by your rules as long as you abide by mine: Whenever I submit a story for censorship and the basis of it is information I know beyond question to be true, or has been found in one of your own publications, or uttered by one of your responsible leaders, or is accredited to the head of a foreign mission — then you cannot deny me the right to dispatch it. Whenever you do, then you ought to know that I shall feel justified in sending it out of the country by any means possible."

Umansky didn't like that at all and said as much, adding that under those conditions he didn't think we were "going to get on very well together".

"Well, at least we know where we stand with each other," I said.

Naturally, my arbitrary attitude did not endear me to the Narkomindel and for many months the going was tough. But when I left the Soviet Union no one could accuse me of having violated my self-imposed promise not to send out a rumor — although the wildest yarns imaginable were being circulated through underground channels.

One night in the Winter of 1932, Mikhailoff and I entered the dining-room of the Hotel Astoria in Leningrad and were greeted courteously by a distinguished-looking *maitre d'hôtel* with white hair and a well-trimmed imperial. He led us to a table, laid a spotless menu before us, and indicated his willingness to take our orders. This was rather unusual service for a Soviet restaurant and, after ordering, I said to Mikhailoff:

"Who's that?"

"That's Baron Wrangel," he replied.

"But I thought Wrangel died in Brussels three or four years ago."

"This isn't Peter Nicholaievich, who commanded the White Russians in the South," Mikhailoff said. "It's his brother. He was Czarist Ambassador at Rome."

"What's he doing here?"

"He has to eat," Mikhailoff said.

I kept an eye on the Baron and observed the unfailing courtesy which he showed to all guests. I noted, too, that while his evening dress was almost threadbare, it was well pressed and fitted his impressive figure perfectly. Perhaps the bosom of the shirt had been laundered too often and the cuffs shaved, but his wing collar was new and turned at the proper angle and his white tie had been knotted by the delicate fingers of a master.

During my few days in Leningrad, I succeeded in making a barely perceptible dent in the Baron's reserve. Before or after the dinner hour he would accept an invitation to sit at my table for a time, but would not join me in a drink. He was never entirely at his ease. His eyes would flit constantly toward the door, and if other diners were in the restaurant he would watch them speculatively. It soon became apparent that any *reference* to Soviet political matters was taboo.

The evening I took the train to Moscow was spent in the restaurant, reminiscing with the Baron. When at last I rose to go, I palmed 500 rubles and, in shaking hands, made an effort to slip them to the aged gentleman. Baron Wrangel withdrew his hand quickly and said:

"I'm sorry. No, thank you."

"Please," I insisted.

The Baron smiled and shook his head. He was not insulted, for he well knew that I was simply trying to alleviate an obvious poverty. He accompanied me across the room and, when we shook hands again at the door, said hesitantly:

"If you care to, the next time you go to London you might bring me a few dress collars and ties — whatever they're wearing this season."

Several months later I arrived in Leningrad from London, bringing a dozen collars and white ties purchased in Bond Street. I had also brought the Baron three new dress shirts. But when I entered the Astoria's restaurant it was to be greeted by another *maitre d'hôtel* — a gruff proletarian in unpressed clothes who motioned me toward a table, eventually laid before me a grimy menu, and walked away, leaving an indifferent waitress to fill my order.

I asked at the desk later where Baron Wrangel was and received non-committal shrugs in reply. A Narkomindel official later threw a little light on the

mystery. The “angels” had carried away the Baron. But what had he done to offend the OGPU, I wanted to know. “Who knows?” — shrugging. Where is he? “Who knows?” — shrugging. But why? Another shrug.

Baron Wrangel never received his shirts, collars, and ties, nor did I ever learn what happened to him.

Practically every Soviet official with whom I came in contact was immensely interested in my employer, William Randolph Hearst, and his fabulous California dwelling-place — *La Cuesta Encantada* — whose 240,000 acres survey the Pacific along a fifty-mile crest of hills midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Time and again I was asked to paint for the uninitiated a picture of the cathedral-towered castle and life on this Enchanted Hill. Their eyes would glisten as I described the magnificent gardens, marble swimming-pools, lesser palaces which serve as guest-houses, private zoo and range where wild but not fierce animal life roams at will. I could see their minds striving to visualize the priceless works of art which ornament this incomparable habitation and the Great Hall where almost daily scores of guests dine from gold dishes laid on sixteenth-century refectory boards beneath the festal Banners of Sienna.

“And what did you say its value was?” an enthralled Comrade asked me one evening.

“Fifty million dollars,” I replied.

“Ah-h-h,” he sighed. “How the Workers and Peasants of America will enjoy that Rest Home when the Time comes.”

One afternoon in October, 1933, I sensed that something important was brewing in the Soviet diplomatic pot. The boys in the press division of the Narkomindel were altogether too cheerful.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“Nothing at all,” they answered.

Whereupon I began to check up on my pipelines to determine what was happening off-stage. The tip-off came from one source and confirmation from others, and then I hot-footed it home and put in urgent telephone calls for London and Berlin, instructing the operator to register additional calls at ten-minute intervals until the order was cancelled. This would insure my receiving new connections should an interruption occur, and also prevent any competitor from using the two long-distance wires in the event he happened to get wind of the same startling story. It worked, and I was able to scoop the world by hours on the fact that President Roosevelt had decided to extend formal recognition to the USSR.

The two governments had agreed to release the information simultaneously — at 4 o’clock in the afternoon Washington time, which was midnight in

Moscow — and when I jumped the gun six hours ahead of schedule there was hell to pay. The Soviet Foreign Office was wild and accused me of having placed them in the anomalous position of breaking faith with Communist Russia's new Capitalist friend. They tried without success to learn the source of my information and threatened all manner of dire punishment for my having dispatched the story without first submitting it for censorship. Had I intimated any knowledge of the impending release, they would instantly have shut off all communication with the outside world. Knowing this and being sure of my facts, I had run the risk of consequences and flashed the news. Nothing serious ever happened because of it.

One cold day in December, 1933, I went to Podolski at the Narkomindel and handed him a story. It was well-written, for I had spent long hours laboring over it; it was sensational, in that it would throw half the chancelleries of Europe and at least one in Asia into a turmoil; better still, it was true. Podolski read the 1500 words with an expressionless face, then pondered for a few moments. Finally he shook his head and murmured:

"Sorry."

"It's true, isn't it?"

"Perhaps."

"Then why won't you okay it?"

"Let me talk to Maxim Maximovitch (Litvinoff) about it. I'll let you know at Sperodonivka this afternoon."

I went to a Foreign Office reception that afternoon and Podolski led me into a quiet corner. He handed me my typewritten cable, smiled, and said:

"Sorry."

"Podolski," I said angrily, "you can't deny me the right to send this story out."

"We haven't."

"But you just said —"

"We only want you to postpone sending it out."

"Until everybody else has it, I suppose?"

"You can send that story out about April, 1935, and —"

"Sixteen months from now!"

"— And if you send it out before, it will be denied. But that won't alter the fact that its premature publication will imperil certain important negotiations and probably upset the peace of the world. Now if you want to do that — go ahead, but as friend to friend I can tell you that the instant you cause that information to be published you will be expelled from the USSR."

"Don't threaten me, Podolski."

"Don't threaten us," Podolski replied imperturbably. "Be sensible. There's enough trouble in the world without your starting more for the sake of one newspaper story. Let me give your assurances to Maxim Maximovitch. . . ."

In the end, Podolski and Litvinoff won. They were convincing and they were right. Revelation at that time of the facts in my possession would have jeopardized the peace of the world.

The story was that Soviet Russia and France had reached an agreement whereby what amounted substantially to the old Franco-Russian military alliance had been reborn. It was a mutual assistance pact, each guaranteeing the other military support in the event of hostilities on the part of any nation against the other.

That was in December, 1933. In April, 1935, it was announced that such a pact had been concluded.

Were the Franco-Soviet statesmen so prescient in 1933 that they were able to foretell that in April, 1935 — sixteen months later — Hitler would be kicking over the traces to such an extent that the formal announcement of a Franco-Russian military alliance would make him pause and think a bit? And make the militarists in Nippon pause and think a bit more? They must have been, for they called the turn accurately.

Windsor

In 1924, I flew to London from Paris and was taken on the staff of the New York *Herald Tribune* by Arthur Draper. One sultry night several weeks later, I somehow found my way to bed in an attic bedroom of a Y.M.C.A. in the vicinity of Russell Square.

I am not clear even now as to my reasons for choosing this particular caravansary, particularly as I had a better room in the neighborhood of Sloan Square, but it probably seemed a good idea at the time. Having engaged at wassail during the evening with such kindred spirits as Tommy Ryan, Spike Hunt, Warre B. Wells, Tommy Watson, *et al*, my last recollection was of much conversation at the Wellington in Fleet Street.

Next morning I was awakened by loud clamoring at my door. Muttering a forlorn inquiry as to what all the disturbance was about, I was told peremptorily to "open the door". There on the threshold stood bald-headed Tommy Ryan, red-eyed and haggard.

"Get up and snap out of it," Tommy snarled.

"What's the big idea?"

"You're going to America today."

"Like hell I am! Get out of here and leave me alone. What time is it?"

"Eleven o'clock — and you're not going back to bed. You're going to

America — with the Prince of Wales. Your train leaves for Southampton at one o'clock."

"Tommy," I said severely, "you shouldn't drink so much. Hallucinations are all right if you can afford them, but you haven't yet reached that state of affluence."

"Stop trying to be funny and get dressed," Ryan said reprovingly. "I tell you you're going to America with the Prince. Here's the cable."

Laboriously spelling out a message from Colonel Robert R. McCormick, of the Chicago *Tribune*, directing my employment to accompany the Prince of Wales to America, I moaned:

"Did you ever know it to fail? Always having to go somewhere when one foot's in the grave."

Then came remembrance that I was on the staff of the New York *Herald Tribune*, and the fact was mentioned to Tommy.

"Draper won't object to your quitting for a better job," he said.

This sounded reasonable and little more than two hours later I was aboard a train bound for Southampton and the *Berengaria*, having found time meanwhile to pack a bag, sever my connection with and obtain a blessing from the *Herald Tribune*, and stop at the Chicago *Tribune* Bureau to pick up one hundred pounds and an almost priceless ticket to New York, for passages aboard the Prince's ship were selling at a high premium. Thus it was that I started for America with Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David Windsor, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, Earl of Chester, Baron Renfrew, later King Edward VIII, today the self-exiled Duke of Windsor. And I never felt so lousy in my life.

I am no worshiper of royalty — many of its representatives whom I have met have given me a supreme pain in the neck — but I have always liked and admired David Windsor. To me he has exemplified those qualities which a king should possess — intelligence, ability, courage, courtesy, and tolerance. His intelligence cannot be disputed by anyone who has read his practical, common-sense speeches — written by himself. As the Empire's most successful salesman and graceful diplomat, his ability cannot be questioned. His penetration of the front-line trenches during the World War, his mad feats of horsemanship, his devotion to flying, and his recent calm demeanor in the face of a would-be assassin's gun bear witness to his courage. I never knew him to be other than the personification of courtesy, but he expected and required courteous treatment from others. And he was intolerant only of sycophancy, unwarranted familiarity, and persistent violations of his privacy by the international press.

His intimate friends call him David — his family Davy — but when he was

Prince of Wales all others were required to address him as Your Royal Highness — except American newspapermen, whose plain “Prince” had to be acceptable. Not for publication, his staff referred to him as H.R.H. He disliked seeing himself referred to in American headlines as Wales, and I never saw him more angry than he was that day in New York harbor when a photographer shouted, “Hey, Eddie! Look this way just a second, won’tcha?” He turned away and refused to pose.

I had met H.R.H. twice before and hoped he would remember me, but the cordiality of his reception exceeded my expectations. When I was presented to him again after our departure from Southampton, he said: “Glad to see you again. I’d rather not have journalists on this trip, but as I know you can be relied upon not to be — er — annoying, why, it’s all right.”

The Prince’s visit to America and Canada was entirely unofficial. He was on a holiday and wanted to see the international polo games which were to be held on Long Island, and to visit his ranch near High River, Alberta. In the hope of avoiding the honors which normally would be paid the heir to Albion’s throne, he was traveling *incognito* as Baron Renfrew.

The official party comprised one-armed General Trotter, his equerry; Captain Gerald Lascelles, brother of the Earl of Harewood, acting as principal secretary; David Boyle, an assistant secretary; Major E. D. Metcalf, a friend; and Scotland Yard men. Then there were Lord and Lady Mountbatten and the Honorable Mrs. Richard Norton, the unexpected guests.

The Mountbattens threw a farewell party for H.R.H. on their Isle of Wight estate the night before the *Berengaria* sailed and among those present were Mrs. Norton, a long-time friend of the Prince, and George, his favorite brother. Late that evening Edward invited these four to accompany him to America. Prince George and Lord Mountbatten were on active duty with the Navy and protested that they could not obtain leave of absence; besides, the *Berengaria* was booked solid and there was little likelihood of prospective voyagers surrendering their *de luxe* accommodations. H.R.H. waved aside these objections and telephoned the Admiralty and Cunard Line officials. When the *Berengaria* left Southampton, the Prince of Wales was occupying one royal suite and in another, on the opposite side of the deck, were the Mountbattens and Mrs. Norton. Being on probation with his royal parents at the time and not wishing to run the risk of becoming involved in escapades, Prince George had begged off.

Aboard the *Berengaria* there were quite a few ambitious Americans papas and mamas who employed every conceivable device to enable their daughters to meet and dance with the most sought-after bachelor in the world. During his strolls around the deck they would waylay him and try to engage him in

conversation; in the bar they would pause at his table and casually invite him to have a drink. He was courteous but definite in his refusals. Unabashed, they would devise other schemes. Many of them sent him letters and some even resorted to bribery.

A millionaire Westerner approached me the second day out and offered \$5000 if I would introduce his wife and daughter to the Prince. I said nothing about the matter, but there was little that went on aboard ship that H.R.H. didn't know about, and the next day he sent for me and asked if it was true that I had refused the bribe. When I admitted that it was true, he muttered angrily:

"Damn such people!"

He walked nervously back and forth across the room, then said:

"Thanks very much for not taking it. Will you tell me who they were?"

Seeing no reason for concealing the man's identity, I told him. He made a note of the name, and as I was leaving paid me this compliment:

"I shall be glad to meet any of your *friends*."

There was dancing in the salon that evening and H.R.H. arranged his seat so he could look squarely at the millionaire who had tried to bribe me. Probably by having crossed a steward's palm with gold, he had managed to obtain a table next to that of the royal party in the hope of having his over-jeweled wife and sappy-looking daughter recognized and perhaps danced with. The Prince's persistent inspection of them was so pointed that they became flustered and soon left.

At an inconspicuous table in a far corner of the room sat an amiable elderly lady and a small, dark-haired, slender girl of twenty-six. They were Mrs. M. C. Burke and her niece, Miss Leonora Cahill, of St. Louis. Not even by the flicker of an eyelash had they indicated that they knew the Prince of Wales was in the room. This evening, as well as the previous one, she was dancing occasionally with two shipboard acquaintances of whom her aunt approved. She was not beautiful, but she had charm and danced exquisitely. Perhaps it was these facts which attracted the Prince's attention, although more likely it was because she resembled his good friend Adele Astaire. In any event, while female hearts palpitated and blood pressure increased, H.R.H. sent General Trotter to dance with Miss Cahill. Presumably his equerry's report was favorable, for when the orchestra struck up again the General led his royal master across the salon and presented him to the unassuming little girl from St. Louis. And for the remainder of the voyage, to the great disappointment of scores of beautiful women, he never danced with anyone else, except, of course, Mrs. Norton and Lady Mountbatten.

But after all, that was his method at all times everywhere. He invari-

ably chose his companions with complete disregard for the conventions.

Edward's amazing vitality never failed to startle me. His physique is slight and he is extremely nervous, yet he can keep going long after more powerful men are ready to drop from exhaustion. On this trip he danced every afternoon and evening, imbibed freely of his favorite tippie, which is whisky-soda, engaged daily in the stiffest kind of gymnastic workouts, including swims in the ship's pool, walked friends around the deck until their legs almost dropped off, and energetically participated in such ship's games as a tug of war, potato race, pillow fight, and jousting match on a greased pole. And though he seldom retired until the wee sma' hours, he invariably reappeared a few hours later looking as fresh as a tropical dawn.

H.R.H. could reprimand a person deserving it more thoroughly and simply than anyone I have ever known. Besides myself and several British journalists there was a representative of the Hearst press aboard the *Berengaria* who had attached himself to the party, but for some reason H.R.H. didn't care for him. He would laugh and joke with us, but this reporter's questions he answered curtly. I was in the royal suite with him and the Prince and David Boyle late in the afternoon of the day before we reached New York, when the Hearst man broached the subject of continuing with the party to the ranch in Canada.

"Impossible," Edward said promptly.

"But you can't exclude me," the correspondent protested. "I represent Mister Hearst."

"You have been excluded," the Prince replied calmly.

"Listen, Prince," the reporter began argumentatively, "you don't want to have any more trouble with the press than necessary, do you?" When Edward maintained silence, he continued: "Well, let me go with you and I promise that no other representative of a Hearst newspaper will bother you."

"I'm sorry, but it's impossible," young Windsor said firmly.

"Well, let me tell you this, Prince," the reporter exploded, "you can't take these other fellows and not take me. Unless you agree to let me go to the ranch with you, I'm going to radio Mister Hearst to turn loose his minions on you as soon as you arrive in New York. And believe me, they'll make life miserable for you."

During this scene H.R.H. had been making gentle passes at an imaginary golf ball with a putter. When this threat was uttered, he reacted to the extent of swinging the putter backward around his shoulders as though he were going to drive off. Boyle and I later agreed that we expected him to make a swing at the journalist's head. But Edward controlled his impulse admirably. With the club in mid-air his face grew hard, his eyes cold, and he stared at

the reporter with such intensity that all the bluster left him with the suddenness of a busted balloon.

"To hell with you and Mister Hearst!" H.R.H. said disdainfully. "You can tell him to let loose his minions and be god-damned." And with that he turned and left the room.

That evening Mr. Hearst's representative got drunk. About ten o'clock he joined a select little group that had gathered in the lounge to enjoy a private performance by Grace Larue, of vaudeville fame. Through a porthole we had seen H.R.H. promenading the deck with General Trotter and pausing occasionally to listen. Finally the pair entered the room, took a seat in the corner, and ordered drinks. Grace gestured that the party was over, when a steward crossed the room and said:

"If you please, Madame. His Royal Highness directs me to request that you continue your recital."

That almost floored Grace, but she rallied and the show went on — by royal command. I noticed the minion of the feudal baron of San Simeon struggle to his feet and stagger across to the royal table. Presumably he asked for permission to sit down, for H.R.H. gestured toward a seat into which he dropped. What in hell is that idiot trying to do? I wondered. After Grace finished her song we found out.

One of those silences descended upon the salon and we heard the reporter apologizing between hiccoughs for what he had said that afternoon.

"Your apology is accepted," H.R.H. said.

"Thank you," the reporter said. "That's swell of you. You're a fine guy and I like you — everybody likes you. We're going to separate tomorrow — maybe we'll never meet again — but before we part I want you to answer one question — just one — and it's a question everybody in the world would like to have answered and I want it exclusive for the Hearst papers.

"What everybody in this world wants to know is this, Prince," the brilliant reporter said. "Why in the hell you can't stay on the back of a horse?"

If a bomb had exploded, it would not have startled us more. I had expected the worst, but nothing so bad as that. I saw Edward remove the pipe from his mouth, lift his glass and drain it, then stare intently at his interrogator. The face of General Trotter was pale with anger. The Prince stood up and in a quiet voice which carried to the four corners of the large room, said:

"You may remind the readers of the Hearst papers that I have never been thrown from a horse; my horses have always fallen with me."

I have met H.R.H. twice since and found him friendly, but unalterably opposed to interviews. Now he is the Duke of Windsor and self-deposed Monarch of England. Perhaps the story is apocryphal, but I have never been

able to rid myself of the feeling that there was something more than words behind the story that he had kissed the newly-married Duchess of York and said, "I salute you as the future Queen of England." I can never forget the inferences forced upon me by certain remarks and from which there was only one conclusion: that the prospect of ascending the throne of England was vastly distasteful.

"Why wasn't I born to be treated like other people — as a human being?" he demanded on one occasion. And on another: "Hell! if only I could get away from all the sycophancy." And still again: "I wonder how it would feel to walk down the streets without carrying the British Empire on my shoulders."

When the news came that a certain king had been dethroned, he commented sympathetically: "Uneasy lies the head —" Then, thoughtfully, "It would be hell to be a king where you're not wanted — but still, it might be hell anyway."



FIRE OF SPRING ABOVE

BY LEIGH HANES

THERE are always a few scraps of Winter
Pigeon-holed in woodlands, tucked away
Where never a woodland wanderer would enter
In April or May,

Or even as late as June when rhododendron
In a blue weave of rain comes out of gloom,
And sometimes I have seen them hidden under
Azalea bloom —

Fire of Spring above for the eye discerning,
But under the leaves the fragments none can know
Till hands have worked their way through deeper burning
And touched a breath of snow.

THE LIBRARY

The Captains and the Kings

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

DUSK OF EMPIRE, by Wythe Williams. \$3.00. *Scribner.*

THERE is Mr. Wythe Williams: in 1910 he was a staff reporter on Joseph Pulitzer's *World* of lamented memory, much exhausted from a Winter of covering strikes, crimes, and special investigations. Desiring to refresh himself with foreign travel, he obtained leave of absence and sailed on the *St. Paul* to spend three months in Europe. He remained twenty-six years. His vacation was, actually, six days at sea and one ashore. On the eighth day, being a well-brought-up young man, he left his card on the London office of the *World*. Mr. James M. Touhy, Pulitzer's gentleman in England, drafted him for work on the story of King Edward VII, his death and funeral.

Fortuitously, Mr. Wythe Williams had engaged a hotel room overlooking the line of march, and what he saw from it, the day they took Edward to his tomb, was more than a State Funeral: it was the last great pageant of the British

Empire, where the old Europe, crowned and sceptered and knit in stately dynastic alliances, showed its splendors in the sun for the last time. The spectacle he describes sets the cadence for his memoir of the quarter-century that followed. There was the little coffin on the gun-carriage under the Union Jack, with the new King walking behind it, and the slender blond child who became the Prince of Wales, and briefly the eighth Edward in his turn. Then rode, three abreast, an Emperor, seven Kings, and the heir of Austria. In the first three, flanked by the sedate monarchs of Norway and Denmark, blazed the German Kaiser, glaring imperially under his helmet: he is just now the exemplary country squire of Doorn in the Low Countries: but Haakon and Christian X still enjoy their thrones and follow harmless interests, much respected. The second three were Alphonso XIII, today a private gentleman,

reported to have financial worries; and Manuel of Portugal and Ferdinand of the Bulgars, who are dead. Dead also, in exile, is George of Greece; and dead, Albert of the Belgians; and dead the last, most tragically, with how great a train of ghosts to follow him, for he was Francis Ferdinand, the Austrian archduke. Then rode solid ranks of Grand Dukes and Princes, and certain less brilliant republican representatives: M. Pihon for the president of France, in a carriage with a stolid French general named Joffre; and, beaming on the crowd, all teeth and eyeglasses, the Ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, lately returned from some rough shooting in the King-Emperor's African dominions.

All the world appeared to mourn. There was no country, however remote, that failed to fill its place in that processional. Then England came with mournful civic pomp, mournful officials: the Navy in blue and gold, Coronel and Jutland ahead of them: and the Army, in scarlet and braid and badger's hair and pipe-clay; names undreamed of, Ypres, the Somme, Passchendaele, casting unseen shadows across their line of march. All this, young Mr. Williams saw from his window, and sees it more clearly now. And let the reader

have that last magnificence in his mind as he reads, because it is gone out of the world forever, and Mr. Williams' succeeding chapters chronicle its passing.

The London that was had urbanity and manner, and the gentlemen of the press made the rounds of the chancelleries in high hats, morning coats, and striped trousers. One was granted an interview with the great and good Andrew Carnegie, Laird of Skibo Castle: one met, at Claridge's, a slight dapper Texan, said to be a power in the politics of that remote State, presently to have wider reputation: an unusual man, wise and honest and strong, Mr. Williams comes to conclude, being good friends with E. M. House. There were assignments in Paris, the gay Paree of legend, that our new generation never saw and never will see: Sarah Bernhardt was enthroned upon the stage: Gaston Chalmette was perpetrating pungent editorials: a politician named Clemenceau was fulminating and growling somewhere: men talked of Agadir and of the Russian Alliance; but Mr. Williams records no general apprehension of the coming war.

Nineteen-eleven, and 'twelve and 'thirteen: the terms of conscript service were being lengthened, and the tall ships that met at Jutland

were going into commission: the fine German battle-cruisers, *Derfflinger*, *Moltke*, *Von der Tann*; the powerful fast battleships of the Grand Fleet, *Queen Elizabeth*, *Barham*, *Warspite*. Experiments with chlorine gases; experiments with aircraft: none of this bothered the boulevards. The sheath-skirt and the hobble-skirt were garments of those days, and the glimpse of a silken leg, from ankle to knee, was an exciting thing. . . .

Then 1914: Mr. Williams recounts the experience of the Hungarian Guard-Lieutenant Vadnay, whose regiment was on maneuvers near Sarajevo in Bosnia one day in June: and how the Lieutenant mounted guard over a bier where lay the first dead of the World War, Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his consort. In August, Mr. Williams and his colleagues were blithely following the fighting in Parisian taxicabs, much inconvenienced by the military police, and increasingly, as the war got itself organized, by the censor. He could not, really, lend his approval to the censorship, as the Allies organized and applied it. I never saw a pressman who could.

Indefatigable and courageous, the writer served for a while in an ambulance section, got himself accredited by the French authorities,

and brought out good stories. He is a reporter of the first rank, and had the best opportunities for observation; yet in the small field of which I have special knowledge, I find certain statements open to question. There is, for example, his chapter on the Verdun battle. He quotes Joffre categorically, to the effect that the French losses in *killed* alone, at Verdun, were 460,000, and the German killed, 540,000.

Now, there has been much careful study, by all the staffs, of war casualties. If there is anything in the shifting science of modern war open to tabulation, it is the matter of casualties. Sooner or later a dead man is missed, generally his cadaver is found, and usually his burial is recorded. It is the same with wounded, except that the records are easier to keep. And it is found that a normal proportion of killed to wounded exists: it is, one killed to from six to eight wounded. If a set of figures departs from this proportion, you recheck your figures, and you find, almost invariably, that one set of casualties has been counted twice, or another set not counted at all. The thing is almost absolute.

Applying the factor to the casualties established above, you have 460,000 killed and — at the low rate of six wounded to one dead,

2,760,000 wounded, or a total of 3,220,000 killed and wounded for the French army before Verdun, between the months of February and October in 1916. That is too many dead and wounded. If it were true, every effective in the French combat establishment of that year would have had to be wounded or killed, and some of them twice, on the very narrow Verdun front, which was, at its widest, only some fifty kilometers around the perimeter of the salient. The French Second Army, the Army of Verdun, was maintained at a level of twenty-nine divisions, or some 600,000 officers and men (Petain, in *Verdun*, p. 190) through the active period of the battle. There were 105 divisions in the French Army in 1916, most of which served at least once before Verdun, each formation being taken out while there was enough of it left to reconstitute. Mr. Williams' figures, then, are impossible.

In fact, sober examination tends to show that there was a tremendous flavor of propaganda in the French war statistics, both then and now. But one is not expected to be too critical of one's friends: Mr. Williams was good friends with Frenchmen in high places, and was the flattered recipient of

special confidences. Yet, if he had observed with more attention the first month of the American Argonne battle, he would have discovered fighting in all respects comparable, for fiery earnestness, to the intense periods of Verdun: at any rate, Pershing's men were incurring casualties at about the same high rate as the devoted Frenchmen on the hills of the Meuse two years before. Battle casualties may mean many things, but they always afford an index to stamina. And neither the battle losses of the French, nor their soldierly virtues, need exaggeration to be impressive; and Mr. Williams' acceptance of these pronouncements makes one wonder about the rest of his observations.

Most interesting to the military student also is the chapter on the Neville offensive of 1917, when, Mr. Williams asserts, the French Army was nobbled on the eve of the great victory of the war by the politicians. It is the story he published in *Collier's*, scooping the world, in 1917; and here he gives his news source: General Neville himself. It is an episode still obscure in the records, and the principals, Neville, Mangin, Clemenceau, are all dead. But Mr. Williams' story has at least the presumption of truth, because his good friend

M. Clemenceau, thereafter in power, allowed him to remain in France and enjoy special privileges. Again, one wonders: Clemenceau made war on many fronts.

Mr. Williams' story, faithfully reflecting in tone and tempo the character and sequence of events, falls into broken rhythms as it traces the international patterns of the postwar years. He went to all the Conferences. He interviewed all the Elder Statesmen and some of the Bright Young Men, and was admitted to the intimacy of the most select. And his conclusions are pessimistic. While Briand, named the last of the Great, lived, there could be no war: but Briand is dead, and this writer thinks it now a question of time, and perhaps not so long a time. He sees Europe past her zenith, slipping towards the twilight, and adds:

The first place in the sun is today thrown open to the United States. If it is occupied, then world civilization may not only remain intact, but rise to a brilliance beyond imagination. Otherwise we may live to witness a spectacle that the mind does not yet even grasp, more somber by far than the twilight of empire. For it is dawn of the Gods — or dusk.

Dusk of Empire is valuable as a trained observer's running record of large events and important per-

sonalities in what has been perhaps the most eventful quarter-century in the history of the world. It is equally interesting as a picture of the technique whereby the modern world gets its news: and there may be reflections on the relative values of the old ways and the new. The high correspondents of the pre-war era were versatile gentlemen of wide acquaintance, critical mind, and thoughtful habit. They studied trends and weighed evidence, and had the highest standards for accuracy and completeness. There was not around their necks the maddening urgency of time: they had leisure and dignity. With the war and since the war, all that has changed. The foreign correspondent today has to file his stuff and file it quick. The luxury of peering beneath the surface, of verifying and looking ahead, is not for him: the savants in the home office, on the other side of the world, will handle the interpretative angle: meantime, he must be off after another flash.

It follows that the public prints today have more interpretation in them than news. The historians of the future will have an unenviable task, reconstructing our contemporary events. It will be like trying to isolate a jigger of sherry at large in a hogshead of ditch-water.

THE OPEN FORUM

LEFTISH BARDS AND RED REVIEWERS

SIR: During the high, wide, and handsome 'Twenties, there used to meet for luncheon in midtown New York a group of critics and writers known to envious outsiders as The Algonquin Logrollers, Unlimited. It was alleged that these gentlemen took pains to praise each other's works in the public prints; and it was generally conceded that their benison on even the most modest volume was a guarantee of success. At the time, many bitter words were directed at this quaint habit; but today the loggers have disbanded and scattered to the far ends of the Republic. Some of them are rolling Hollywood producers instead of logs; others have retired to the rusticity of Vermont and national radio hook-ups; and one has even achieved the thought-provoking transformation from baseball reporter to Left-wing soothsayer.

The art of logrolling, however, did not perish when the literary lumberjacks hung up their caulked boots in the Algonquin cloakroom. It is being widely practiced today, and with an effectiveness that must make Alexander Woollcott rub those old eyes in amazement. For the Comrades of Communism have learned the trade secret, improved the technique, and cut loose on their own.

The Leftist stronghold, oddly enough, is the Sunday book supplement of the formerly conservative New York *Herald Tribune*. This little Marxian magazine, though owned and published by practicing capitalists for the supposed delectation of other practicing capitalists, has been annexed by the gifted Red reviewers. They are all represented in its tabloid pages week after week—the Union Square hacks, the lit-

erary Pinkos; and the brood-hens of that noisy flock of aspiring Radical propagandists which nests at Teachers College, Columbia. Conservative critics, or even those of a Liberal turn of mind, are rigorously excluded whenever the Class Struggle is under consideration; in their place, full-page reviews shout the dizzy benefits of the Coming Revolution.

The daily edition of the *Herald Tribune* also does its bit by presenting that gifted Marxist, Comrade Lewis Gannett, who squeals quotidian hosannahs for the thin Red line of heroes. Over on the New York *Times*, until recently, Comrade John Chamberlain spouted his Radical critiques and kept the logs rolling as his confreres sluiced them along to him. Lady-Comrade Dorothy Dunbar Bromley and the aptly-named Carolyn Marx disport themselves on the *World Telegram*. The *New Yorker* pays out good capitalist gold to talented Comrade Clifton Fadiman whose proletarian enthusiasm jolts the lorgnettes of the idle rich each week. (Mr. Fadiman gained considerable celebrity in the Union Square *faubourg* when he set an all-time logrolling record by reviewing Robert Briffault's *Europa* in four consecutive issues of the magazine.) And in *Collier's*, as well as in the innocent pages of *Life* until its recent demise as a humorous sheet, Kyle Crichton has sung a muted literary *Internationale*, while at the same time in the *New Masses* booming the Revolution under his other name, Robert Forsythe. Indeed, the admirable Crichton perfected this Forsythe saga in *Life*, by lavishing praise on his own book, *Redder Than the Rose*.

Again, when versatile Comrade Joseph Freeman, editor of the *New Masses*, pro-

duced his recent weighty opus, *An American Testament*, he was promptly rewarded with a full-page review in the *Herald Tribune's* proletarian supplement. (His testament had already been hailed in the *Daily Worker* by another Communist, Paul de Kruif, as a book which "challenges me to get ready to take my place at the barricades".) And who was assigned to write an unbiased opinion of this revolutionary document for readers of the *Herald Tribune*? Walter Lippmann? Laurence Stallings? Mencken, Boyd, Nock, Cabell, Sokolsky, Hergesheimer? Not at all. The job was given to one of the author's staunchest Comrades-in-Arms — Dr. Horace Gregory. Shortly after the review was presented to the newspaper's palpitant capitalist readers, Comrade Dr. Gregory served on "The Committee of Professional Groups for Browder and Ford" which produced Comrade Freeman as oratorical spellbinder at a hotel banquet for the hungry Reds. That is to say, one good turn deserves another.

For the future guidance of puzzled book-review readers, it might be well to list some of the other critics and writers whose names appeared on the roll of this revolutionary political committee. They were Comrades Rockwell Kent, Robert N. Coates, Jack Conroy, Waldo Frank, Michael Gold, Joseph Gollomb, Granville Hicks, Langston Hughes, S. J. Perelman, William Saroyan, Isidor Schneider, John L. Spivak, and Art Young; and the Lady-Comrades Josephine Herbst, Meridel Le Sueur, Grace Lumpkin, and Genevieve Taggard. It will be interesting to watch for their blurbs on each other's forthcoming proletarian treatises.

The *Herald Tribune's* indomitable *Books* will doubtless review these predictions of the imminent collapse of the Republic with all the joyous bias it accorded Sidney and Beatrice Webb's pitifully inaccurate advertisement for Soviet Russia. That two-volume compendium of senile misinformation was heralded by a front-page banner: "Soviet Communism as a New Civilization — Here The Webbs Describe It in a Huge and Ex-

citing Book". The review itself was from the zealous pen of Comrade-Professor George S. Counts of Teachers College. Similarly, Lady-Comrade Mary Heaton Vorse's autobiography was fulsomely praised in a first-page paean of Marxian good-tidings.

There is no denying that these books are worth reviewing; they are frequently interesting, occasionally well-written, and often of some historical importance. But why — except to roll the logs along — give the book of one Comrade to another Comrade for criticism? To ask Comrade Dr. Gregory what he thinks of Comrade Freeman is the same as asking Mr. Garner (the Vice-President) what he thinks of Dr. Roosevelt; or Mr. Laurel what he thinks of Mr. Hardy; or Mr. Sears what he thinks of Mr. Roebuck.

The Communists naturally approve this logrolling with the greatest glee. But when the shoe is on the other foot they are quick to howl against "discrimination". For instance, in speaking of Joseph Wood Krutch, literary editor of the once-Liberal *Nation*, the *New Masses* said recently:

Many non-Communists have been shocked by his persistent prejudice in handing books by Communists to Trotskyite reviewers with one axe to grind.

Perhaps the Comrades' extraordinary popularity as reviewers for the capitalist press is explained by the fact that of the current books dealing with the American social system, at least eighty per cent offer the Radical point of view; and the fact that many popular novels are dedicated to the proletariat. Sympathetic reviews for these books stimulate sales for the publisher — and encourage him to advertise in the periodical which prints the favorable notices. Thus, a publication employing a critic whose sympathies are devoutly Radical will print favorable comments on a majority of the books issued — and its advertising columns will bloom with profit. Conversely, a publication employing a critic unfortunate enough to hold a Conservative point of view will print reviews unfavorable to this torrent of Radical volumes — and hence its advertising columns will shrink. Conclusion: Newspaper and

magazine publishers are not in business for their health. And the Comrades know it.

ARISTIDES COLOMBO

New York City



TEN MILLION CIRCULATION

SIR: A friend sent me the October and November numbers of THE MERCURY—am now a subscriber—and though in the past I have been caustically critical of H. L. Mencken, now I cannot praise him too highly for his outstanding Americanism and patriotism in his outstanding exposé and criticism of Roosevelt, the hypocrite and demagogue (I voted for Roosevelt four years ago), who has shown himself as the greatest danger to our American form of government that the country has ever known. Channing Pollock's "America Doesn't Give a Damn" is another outstanding article appraising the causes that made Roosevelt's election possible. All honor to them both for their fearless going to the root of the evils that threaten the Republic. There are other fine articles and I shall not again be without THE MERCURY, which I have not been seeing of late. And the format is much better. All success to THE MERCURY and its editors in awakening the public to the Truth almost hidden under the mass of misleading propaganda—paid for out of the United States Treasury. I wish you 10,000,000 circulation.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS JOHNS

Dawson, Y. T., Canada



THREATENING LETTER DEPT.

SIR: The continual anti-New Deal squawking by you and your little band of diehard Old Dealers would be amusing were it not such a pathetic exhibition of bad sportsmanship. You are like a bunch of crooked tin-horn poker players: for long years you have been accustomed to playing the Old Deal with a stacked deck from which you professional sharks got all the face cards and several million American

citizens were dealt the twos and three-spots. Without a murmur the average citizen played your game, in which he was always the loser, with patient quiet sportsmanship, hypnotized by your propaganda that the game was on the square and that "prosperity was just around the corner".

Quit being such squawking pikers, and play the game fairly. To do this requires a little character, in your spoiled children accustomed to cheat. But the prestige of your magazine and your spoiled-child squawkers will not dwindle so fast if you will "snap out" of your temper-tantrums and play the game courageously—as we have played yours! As evidence of your reviving sportsmanship, you are asked to print this letter—and live up to it.

Instead of squawking, your Old Dealers should give thanks to Franklin D. Roosevelt that they still have their businesses. The youth of America is alert to the methods of the filthy propaganda of a crooked, prostitute press. And we, the youth of America, are "going places" with FDR, so you might as well get used to it. Your propaganda cannot influence us. Let the re-election convince you of that. So shut up, you old fogeys and pikers, and fall in line with youth. You've had your day, and this is ours.

We mean what we say, and it is "Roosevelt—or else!"

R. G. BLANCK

Mankato, Minn.



ADVICE

SIR: When I didn't like your articles or editorials I told you so plainly, so now I am going to tell you how much I enjoyed Duncan Aikman's and Albert Jay Nock's articles in your March number. They are wise, tolerant, good-natured articles which can't help appealing to educated, intelligent people—whether they are Radicals or reactionaries, Liberals or conservatives. If any articles convert people to their writers' point of view (which I doubt), then these

are the kind of articles that do it, and not the intolerant, one-sided ones.

I haven't the slightest doubt that the many stupid articles, by Mencken or others, that filled your magazine for months prior to the late election, and that vilified or lied about Roosevelt, made him hundreds, or maybe thousands, of votes. So, I am offering you a piece of advice — free, gratis, for nothing — and that is: if you want to convert your readers to any particular point of view, get Mr. Aikman or Mr. Nock to write your stuff. If they can't make converts, you bet your sweet life that prejudiced, intolerant asses like Mencken won't do so. Keep on publishing such articles as Aikman's and Nock's and *THE MERCURY* will come back in public esteem, and it will once more become a worthwhile magazine that decent, educated people can enjoy — instead of the "gutter" sheet it had become.

GRENVILLE T. CHAPMAN

El Paso, Tex.



FROM A LADY

SIR: Have read with utmost disgust the hateful, spiteful, sarcastic, destructive editorials in your December issue. My first reaction was that it won't be long before you will be destroyed by your own venom. In this day and age, when hatred is so rampant in the world, the fuel you supply will burn you on the pyre. The only thing you inspire in the breasts of your readers is hate, hate for such muckrakers, love for those whom you attack. Roosevelt and LaGuardia, who are working for love, peace, brotherhood, will live on forever, while you will be damned as you damn others.

I know you will not print this, but it has done my soul good to have had my say.

JUST A WOMAN

Southbridge, Mass.



EXILES AND POLITICS

SIR: In your October issue, Mr. Harold Lord Varney in "Is Roosevelt a Socialist?" says of Mrs. Roosevelt: "She endorses the

University of Exile of Dr. Charles A. Beard's New School, whose faculty is composed almost exclusively of Socialist and Communist refugees."¹ May I point out that (1) Dr. Charles A. Beard has not been connected with the New School for Social Research since 1922; (2) that while Mrs. Roosevelt accepted membership on an Advisory Committee of the New School in 1922, this committee has not existed since 1926; (3) that the Graduate Faculty, known as the "University in Exile", founded in 1933 was not endorsed by Mrs. Roosevelt; (4) that no member of the Graduate Faculty is or ever was a Communist, and (5) that the German members of the Faculty are not "refugees" in any strict sense of the term, since they were free to remain in Germany and to this day find no difficulty in securing visas to visit Germany. They were deprived of their posts because of their politics or their religion, and any teaching organization in which they participated had to be set up abroad. Hence the popular name, the "University in Exile", not "the University of Exiles."² As with any group of scholars, some of the members of the faculty are Socialists, some are not. Most of them voted with the Social-Democratic party in the last years of the German Republic, when the only practical choices were the Social Democrats, the Nazis, and the Communists. They have all taken out their first papers but have not been in America long enough to acquire citizenship; hence they have as yet no party alignments here. As a group they are probably more conservative than most Americans, having gone through the miseries of revolution and inflation and having seen democratic political life disrupted by extreme Radicalism.

¹ [Misquoted. The sentence in question, p. 210, Vol. XXXIX, No. 154, reads as follows: "She endorses the 'University in Exile' of Dr. Charles A. Beard's New School, whose faculty is composed almost exclusively of Socialist and Communist German refugees." — *Editor's note.*]

² [Misquoted. Mr. Varney specifically wrote: "University in Exile". — *Editor.*]

I have taken so much space to dispel what in themselves are rather irrelevant errors because I feel that the University in Exile has a right to the sympathetic understanding of the readers of *THE MERCURY*. It was founded for no other purposes than to assert our American faith in the worth of academic freedom, for the world at large as well as for America. We believed that since free scholarship in the social sciences is no longer permitted in Germany, it would be to the advantage of our own country and ultimately of Germany, to set up an organic faculty where German scholars could continue with their work of research and teaching according to the methods that formerly gave pre-eminence to the German university. Elections to the faculty were based solely upon scholarly qualifications, proved by published work and known to informed Americans. The faculty is now operating in its fourth year and has in its classes about 175 students, graduates of American universities and colleges. Its work is recognized by the New York State Department of Education, which confers higher degrees in its behalf on students who have met its requirements.

ALVIN JOHNSON, *Director*
New School for Social Research;
Chairman, "University in Exile".

New York City



MR. VARNEY REPLIES

SIR: Dr. Johnson pivots his argument for the "University in Exile" upon his "faith in the worth of academic freedom". Few Americans, I think, whether of the Right or Left, would differ with him in such a faith. Unfortunately, there is serious question in the minds of many Americans whether zeal for freedom is the actual motivating purpose behind Dr. Johnson's expatriated experiment. There is a wide suspicion that this academic venture is a by-product of the mischievous purpose of our so-called "Liberals" to take sides in the internal politics of Italy and Germany. Under the

cloak of aid for anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist scholars, the New School has set up a festering center of anti-Fascist intellectual propaganda in this country. The research work in the "social sciences" is only too often the writing of anti-Hitler and anti-Mussolini books by the faculty (Professor Salvemini's *Under the Axe of Fascism* is a current instance), and the delivery of anti-Fascist lectures. All of which, of course, is permissible under American custom to those who care to indulge in such windmill-jousting, but why call it "academic freedom"? Propaganda is the usual word.

The best indication of the obvious Left bias of the "University in Exile" is the fact that it houses academic refugees only from Fascist nations. To the best of my information, no White Russian emigré from the Moscow dictatorship has been endowed by Dr. Johnson with one of his fellowships. Indeed, not even a Trotskyite Russian appears in the charmed and subsidized circle. I shall be pleased to be corrected if I am mistaken.

If Dr. Johnson is sincere in his disinterested zeal for pure scholarship, let me propose to him a simple test. Would he support, with equal zeal, a university of German scholars in this country, composed of believers in the Nazi philosophy? Unhappily, the recent exhibition of "Liberal" broadmindedness at Harvard, when Dr. Haefstaengl's proffered scholarship was hysterically refused, demonstrated only too well the elastic conception of "free scholarship" which moves most of our self-styled Liberals. Another instance occurred two years ago when the *Nation*, to which Dr. Johnson is a frequent contributor, engaged in one of the most despicable and cowardly attempts ever witnessed to throttle academic freedom at Columbia University. At that time, an attempt was made to whip up public opinion to such an indignation point that Dr. Butler would be forced to deprive of their livelihoods a number of Italian scholars at Columbia whose only offense was that they had refused to teach anti-Fascism to their classes. Where were Dr.

Johnson and his New School freedom-lovers then? By some strange kink, our "Liberals" never seem to become alarmed over assaults upon freedom unless it is a Leftist who is under attack.

Personally, I cannot see any profit to America, materially or spiritually, in the transplanting of these European wranglings to our intellectual soil. For this reason, I am firmly convinced that Mrs. Roosevelt made a deep mistake in sending her greetings to the "University in Exile". We are at peace with the government which has been voted into power by the overwhelming majority of the German people. The wife of our President should offer no sympathy to the political recalcitrants from that country who are now under accusation of fighting their government from the safe ramparts of endowed American professorships.

HAROLD LORD VARNEY

New York City



MENCKENIANA

SIR: Mr. H. L. Mencken concludes an amusing and vastly comforting article with what seems to me a refutation of all that precedes it. I refer to the clause "... the best pickings, as usual, are going to the smartest fellows"; and I am particularly concerned with Mr. Mencken's interpretation of the word "smartest" in this connection. I do not think it unreasonable to assume, in view of the context, that by "the smartest fellows" he refers to those who display the greatest ability for accumulating money. Although I am not a Red — nor even a Pink — I am by no means convinced that "the best pickings" should go to the opportunists. As Mr. Mencken indicates, it is true that in America those who are concerned only in chasing the dollar usually become more wealthy than those to whom money is a secondary goal.

Many merchants seize every opportunity to exploit the public. They are doubtless "smarter" — and eventually more wealthy — than those merchants who govern them-

selves by a code of ethics. But is this fair? Would Mr. Mencken have us believe that exploitation and shady dealing should be rewarded with the "best pickings"? I think not. He himself has other objects in life beside earning money. If this were not so, he would be writing for Hearst or the Macfadden publications. And if you, who published his article, were "smart", i.e., devoted exclusively to earning money, you would be editing *True Confession* or *Adventure Stories*.

JOSEPH B. BREED, III

Swampscott, Mass.

SIR: I take twenty magazines, newspapers, etc. Yours seems to be the only one which does not give a damn on whose corns it treads. When you permit your readers to dictate your policy, then perhaps I may quit. At present you don't seem afraid to offend Father Somebody, or Rabbi Someone, or Bishop So-and-So. I suppose later when you have an enormous circulation and become fat you will change your policy.

And *don't* — please don't — let your readers keep Mr. Mencken from contributing.

WILLIAM R. STACKHOUSE

Marion, S. C.

SIR: The letters attacking Mr. H. L. Mencken in the March issue of *THE MERCURY* point to a rather painful lack of some virtues in the writers: principally the theological virtue of Charity, the cardinal virtues of Justice and Temperance, and the social virtue of good taste.

I have, personally, no especial reasons for loving Mr. Mencken. In his time he has unloosed many shafts against Faith and Morals, and Faith and Morals is a subject in which I happen to be deeply interested. Furthermore, he has repeatedly poured forth fire and brimstone upon metaphysics, and metaphysicians — a crime which calls forth in me the Beast from the Depths. Nevertheless, in justice, I feel obliged to protest against the bitter attacks made upon him in these letters.

Passing by other things, Mr. Mencken has been called a coward: accused of slithering and coiling and striking with fang and venom. Now, anyone who knows anything of Mr. Mencken's writings must see plainly that cowardice is not a vice of which he may be accused. If, to use the words of Chesterton, I meet Mr. Mencken fifty years from now, a reverent being with a silver beard sweeping the earth, I feel quite sure that I shall find him as of yore — positive, bluff, and straightforward in all his ways, and altogether free from snakiness or cowardly subtlety. Mr. Mencken is not one to shun a "manly fight". He is a clean fighter and a civilized man.

Those who launched their diatribes upon Mr. Mencken fail to make allowances. Mr. Mencken's methods are often certainly open to criticism, his philosophy is definitely wrong, his conclusions are frequently in error; but after all, his methods, his philosophy, and his conclusions happen to be the best he has. In brief, the opponents of Mr. Mencken do not conceive of the possibility of his being in good faith, or as a theologian might express it, in invincible ignorance. If they realized this, they would not be so bitter. *Ignorantia facit involuntarium.*

I advise the enemies of Mr. Mencken to be patient. For the day must eventually come when he can no longer dwell in the midst of his iniquities. He will be cast into Purgatory where he will be compelled to spend some time in the company of metaphysicians, theologians, the rev. clergy, Methodist bishops, and Baptist ministers. Let his critics think with glee of that day, and possess their souls in patience.

PAUL CHESTER

Los Angeles



IN BEHALF OF HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR: Heading the article, "Gov. Hoffman, The Jersey Skyrocket", the odd union of Isaac and McAnally, as the name of the author, gave promise of Hebraic perspicacity and Celtic wit. Upon concluding my read-

ing of that extraordinary piece, I decided that it was a phoney signature to a phoney composition. I turned to the Contributors page to learn who was this Isaac McAnally, and lo — he is a political reporter for the New York *Evening Post*, a really living person, and a reporter, apparently, who as a sideline attempts to write magazine articles as funny as his name.

McAnally finds it to be irresistibly comical (and so reports it) that Harold G. Hoffman enlisted as a private for military service during the World War — that, without college education, he returned home Captain, bearing decorations of appreciative governments — that the people elected him to the Assembly of New Jersey, then as Mayor of South Amboy, then to the U. S. Congress — that a governor of New Jersey appointed him to the important office of Commissioner of Motor Vehicles — and that finally in the face of a national Democratic landslide, the people of the State of New Jersey elected him Governor. A richly humorous career indeed! Here, at last, was a ludicrous figure at whom a serious political reporter for a leading (?) New York daily might point a laughing finger.

Not one word of the opposition of the reactionary element in his own party when he ran for Governor; not one word of the almost universal opposition of the press during that campaign, but just a jovial sneer at his victory, and at his friends who made that victory possible. Not one word of the progressive program he proposed in his messages to the Legislature, nor how that program was sabotaged by the now embittered, but nevertheless same reactionary opposition in his own party. Not one word of how he has reduced the bonded debt of New Jersey by many millions of dollars; of his fight against the reduction of the already small salaries of the low-bracket public employees; of his insistence upon adequate provisions for Relief; or his fight for a "pay-as-you-go" system in State affairs. Are not these matters comical too?

Isaac McAnally's article is not political

reporting. It is a fraudulent piece of propaganda, hopefully designed to be an obituary for Harold G. Hoffman, but alas, like that about Mark Twain, the rumor of his political death is highly exaggerated, as time will tell.

MORRIS SPRITZER

New Brunswick, N. J.



NEGROES IN THE AIR

SIR: Mr. Collins' reply to Mr. George S. Schuyler regarding Negroes in the air is an insult to all Aframericans. His statement "that obstacles have *not* always been placed in the way of would-be Negro aviators", is not only ridiculous but untrue. This I can prove from personal experience. After graduating from the University of Illinois in 1922 in electrical engineering, I applied to the U. S. Army Air Corps School at Rantoul, Illinois, for admittance to the air school, but was refused because I am a Negro. Further investigation revealed that the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps air schools will not accept Negroes as students. I personally know several other Negroes who have been refused admittance.

However, this made me more determined to learn aviation, so I applied in person to commercial air schools in Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Cleveland, and many other cities, being refused each time. But still determined, I went to Paris, France, in 1927, where I was accepted as a student, but due to financial conditions I had to return to my native land, America, land of the free and home of the brave. But my connections with the French Aviation School, and the Depression starting, opened a way for me in a commercial aeronautical college in Los Angeles. Hence, I drove across the country to Los Angeles, entered this school, and completed aeronautical engineering, even though I was refused admittance to the Curtiss-Wright School of Aeronautics in Los Angeles.

Further proof of Mr. Collins' untrue state-

ment is that during the past six months, I have received letters from 315 Negroes in nearly every State who, having been refused admittance to aviation schools in their community, wish to journey to Los Angeles to enroll in the school of aeronautics known as the aviation school of the Craftsmen of Black Wings, a school owned and operated entirely by Negroes (I'm sure this is great news to Mr. Collins), of which I am the chief instructor. I organized the school because of this disgraceful situation existing in the U. S., and which school will soon disprove the idiotic idea that Negroes cannot fly. If given an equal opportunity, a Negro will outdo a white man in almost anything. That is why white people refuse to give Negroes equal opportunities.

LIEUT. WILLIAM J. POWELL

Los Angeles



THE CASE AGAINST MILK

SIR: I have often wondered why some MERCURY author has never pointed out the absurdity of people using cow's milk in their diet. I believe that cow's milk is fine food for calves; goat's milk is good for young goats; and breast milk is very good for babies. But all young animals are sooner or later weaned. If God meant for us to drink milk all our lives, women would lactate from puberty to the menopause continuously, or we would have mammary glands instead of salivary glands in our mouths.

The above subject is something I have wanted to get off my chest for a long time.

JAMES L. RHODES

Everett, Wash.



CONCERNING MR. POLLOCK

SIR: Channing Pollock's "America Doesn't Give a Damn" is most timely, as it sets forth in concise and forceful terms the crisis which thousands of thinking people

(Continued in back adv't section, p. xx)

THE CONTRIBUTORS

WITTER BYNNER (*Itinerant Bird*), the well-known poet and translator, lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. ROBERT BYRON (*The Cost of Communism*) is an English journalist who has traveled widely in Soviet Russia. ELIZABETH COATSWORTH (*The Day*) is the author of several volumes of verse, and stories for children. She contributes poems to many periodicals. ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN (*Door to the Night*), winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1936, is at work on a book concerning the history of the Kennebec River in Maine. WHITFIELD COOK (*Happy Ending*) is a young writer who lives in Old Lyme, Connecticut. HAVELOCK ELLIS (*Sexual Freedom Today*) is the distinguished English authority on sexology. LEIGH HANES (*Fire of Spring Above*) has practiced law in his home town, Roanoke, Virginia, and taught poetry at Hollins College. Since 1929 he has edited a magazine of verse, *The Lyric*. GERALD HOLLAND (*Baseball and Ballyhoo*) is the publicity director of the St. Louis Browns. LOUISE McNEILL (*Ego*), a former newspaperwoman, now teaches school in West Virginia. LOLA PERGAMENT (*In the Blue Air*) is a young poet who serves as State editor for the Federal Writers' Projects of Georgia. EUGENE PHARO (*This Mother's Day Business*), a special correspondent for the *Washington Post*, contributes occasionally to the magazines. WILLIAM SEAGLE (*You Can't Beat the Landlord*), lawyer and editor, is writing a general history of law, to be published by Knopf. H. W. SEAMAN (*Coronation Crazy*), a native-born Englishman, has served on newspapers in Canada and the United States. He contributes frequently to English and American publications. LINTON WELLS (*Blood on the Moon*) has traveled as a foreign correspondent in most of the countries of the world during the last twenty-five years. His book, *Blood on the Moon*, to be published this month by Houghton Mifflin, chronicles the saga of his adventures.

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of France . . . and to a better understanding of the Gallic spirit. And, in a Breton or Norman seaport, when the fishing fleet comes in and the wide-shouldered, keen-eyed sailors swing along the quay, you understand more clearly the tradition of discipline and courage which has made possible the French Line fleet.

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Recorded MUSIC

BY IRVING KOLODIN

*** indicate an outstanding performance, ** a competent performance, * an acceptable performance. †† denote exceptional recording, †† efficient recording, † poor recording.

ORCHESTRAL

***†† *Die Meistersinger, Wagner: Entrance of the Guilds and Dance of the Apprentices* (RCA-Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1.50). A sonorous and well-paced performance of two excerpts from the third act of Wagner's great operatic comedy. Eugene Ormandy gets Stokowskian co-operation from the Philadelphia Orchestra, also superior assistance from the engineers.

***†† *Portsmouth Point Overture, William Walton:* (Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1.50). A vigorous *jeux d'esprit* by England's most talented young composer, plentifully dissonant, but not unreasonably so. Well played by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, ably led by Adrian Boult.

PIANO

****†† *Well-Tempered Clavichord, Volume Two, Preludes and Fugues, Nos. 35 to 43, Bach:* (Victor, seven 12-inch records, \$14). A continuation of the Bach Society enterprise, which will eventually embrace the entire work. The splendid pianist is Edwin Fischer.

****†† *Sonata in E Minor, Opus 90, Beethoven:* (Columbia, two 12-inch records, \$3). One of the loveliest of Beethoven's piano sonatas, beautifully played by Egon Petri. A thoroughly desirable recording for those who do not possess the Schnabel performance.

VOCAL

****†† *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Ach, Ich Liebe und Martern Aller Marten* (Mozart): (Victor, one 12-inch record, \$1.50). Margherita Perras, a Greek soprano unknown here, has the unenviable task of singing these two difficult airs. However, she acquits herself remarkably well, especially in *Martern Aller Marten*, one of Mozart's most exacting creations. Bruno Seidler-Winkler directs the assisting Berlin



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State Opera Orchestra, and the results are in every way exceptional.

***†† *L'Africana O Paradiso!* (Mayerbeer) and *Carmen: Flower Song* (Bizet): (Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2). Another of this company's efforts to superimpose accompaniments of modern strength and fullness on old recordings by Enrico Caruso. The synchronization has been accomplished with high skill, but illusion is destroyed by the needle scratch heard in all the vocal passages. However, the singing is superb, and both arias were Caruso specialties.

DANCE

My Last Affair and The Mood I'm In: (Victor, 10-inch, \$.75). Lionel Hampton, vibraphone virtuoso of the Goodman quartet, here makes a debut at the head of his own orchestra. An entertaining affair, not only for the Hampton performance, but also for the excellence of the band.

Evenin' and Shoe Shine Boy: (Vocalion, 10-inch, \$.35). Two familiar tunes vigorously swung by one of the best small bands on records, Jones-Smith, Inc., an ensemble based on the talents of the remarkable Count Basie (at the piano). The first has an excellent vocal by James Rushing.

Where or When and Johnny One Note: (Victor, 10-inch, \$.75). First excerpts from the new Rogers-Hart musical, "Babes in Arms", expertly done by Ruby Newman and band. The lyric *Where or When* represents most of the quality of this disc, for the reverse is fairly mechanical hot-stuff. Ray Heatherton is the able vocalist.

Southern Holiday: (Columbia, 12-inch, \$1.25). The latest effort of Reginald Forsythe, he of *Dodging a Divorcee* and *Serenade for a Wealthy Widow*. Don't let that deceive you, however, for this is no more than pseudo-Gershwin, rather laboriously concocted. There is here and there a superior idea, thoroughly subdued by the surrounding banalities. Henry Hall directs the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra, and Forsythe is the solo pianist.

Pennies from Heaven and For Sentimental Reasons: (Columbia, 10-inch, \$.75). Neither tune is remarkable, but the singing by the lady known as Hildegarde is superior of its highly sentimental sort.

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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page 127)

see as confronting America. Those who oppose this view either fail to note the current political trends of "Democracy" or are willing to sacrifice "liberty for security" — not realizing that security can be secured and preserved only by the efforts of the people themselves and that it cannot be guaranteed by any government.

Mr. Pollock's is a clarion call, but I fear it will fall on deaf ears; for, as someone has said, "Against stupidity the Gods themselves struggle in vain."

IRVING H. REYNOLDS

Milwaukee

SIR: In the January issue I note that a Mr. Wilson calls Channing Pollock undemocratic; yet in his very next statement condemns THE MERCURY for printing "a point of view". Just what form of democracy does the critic represent? I extend my admiration to THE MERCURY for being so loyal to open-minded principles as even to print such an unfounded and narrow-minded attack upon Mr. Pollock's brilliant article. It is just this grateful reception of criticism, regardless of its justification, that preserves THE MERCURY's unique quality. The loss of such readers as Mr. Wilson would not be of disadvantage.

W. R. CRAFT, JR.

University, Va.

SIR: Visiting in Virginia over the Thanksgiving holiday, I picked up a copy of THE MERCURY for November, and read aloud to a small group Mr. Channing Pollock's article, "America Doesn't Give a Damn". We all agreed that this was one of the best articles we had read, and I have just sent to your office for ten copies which I intend to send to friends of mine, not only in this country, but in Europe. There are so many people in this country of whom it can be said truly — they do not give a damn; so many who want money without making any effort to obtain it, and whose morale has sunk to zero. These people are not at all disturbed over the bureaucratic tend-



THE OPEN FORUM

encies of our present government, and are unwilling to think, or look forward to what the future may have in store for them.

In this same November issue I read Donald Richberg's article "Enemies of the New Deal" and it seems ridiculous to think that he was the only one in the New Deal party who could be selected to present the opposite point of view. General Johnson in one of his articles told us that Mr. Richberg had begged him to intercede with President Roosevelt with the idea of satisfying his ambition to become a member of the Supreme Court. After reading "Hunting the Jabberwock in 1936" I could not help but feel—how a man who could write such a ridiculous, childish article, full of words and saying nothing of any value, could possibly be a fit subject to sit in the company of Justices Cardozo and Brandeis. Here's hoping, however, that like several of the others, including Rex Tugwell, he has been placed upon the Brain-Trust shelf for good and all.

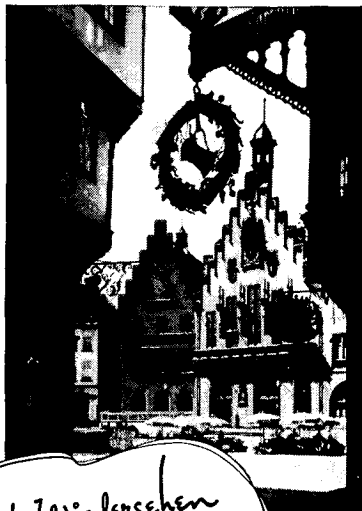
Thanks again for Mr. Pollock's article, and if you should decide to have any reprints made, I would appreciate your letting me know.

WARNER D. HUNTINGTON

P.S. Copy for Mr. Richberg enclosed. Please forward.
New York City

SIR: I have read with great interest Mr. Pollock's article, "The Survival of the Un-fittest", and believe I can understand from the general trend of his article that he is no believer in Christianity's efficacy as a means of relieving human ills, or curing them. I further gather from his article that he blames Christianity for the preservation of the weak and ill-adapted fellow creatures who constantly surround us. If Mr. Pollock will oblige me by stating just where, and when, Christianity has ever been practiced as a living, working philosophy of life by any government on this earth, or any substantial part of the population of any nation on this earth, he will be making an

(Continued on page xxii)



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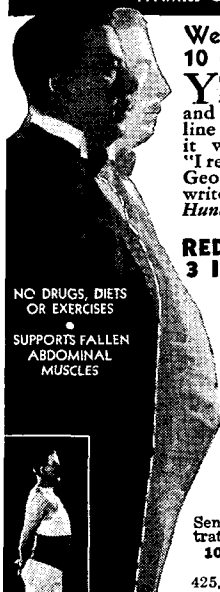
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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxi)

historical contribution to religious, eco-
nomic, and political history.

ROBERT L. FAUCETT

Los Angeles

SIR: Somehow, the reasoning of Mr. Ed-
win Russell in THE OPEN FORUM for Janu-
ary, does not seem to ring quite true. Sup-
pose the world would continue to wag on
through coming ages, as Mr. Russell sug-
gests it would, no matter whether we give
a damn about anything or not; suppose that
nothing we say or do, think or feel, would
cut any figure, yet — surely there is a fly
somewhere in this particular ointment.

I cannot, myself, seem to feel that I want
to belong to those who have, or will, or can
let the cycles of time grind out what they
may, and I be content merely to "eat, drink,
sleep", etc. Of course, if we cannot look
back upon the early foundation of our
country, and upon those who gave it to us,
with honor and reverence, and view with
sorrow the condition into which as a nation
we now have fallen, then we may most ap-
propriately class ourselves with that mass of
American citizens so accurately described by
Mr. Pollock as those who do not "give a
damn".

As for myself, I look back over a line of
ancestors of sturdy, independent stock, none,
so far as I know, possessing any wealth. But
I can never be grateful enough for the spirit
they handed down to me. I regard it as a
rich heritage. And I am very sure, for I
know the lives of many of them, that they
were concerned in matters beyond their
physical well-being.

I hope we may have more of Mr. Pol-
lock's articles. As a people we need them.

G. HOSMER

Farmington, Minn.

FROM A FRIEND

SIR: Permit me to intrude into the some-
what scorching columns of your OPEN
FORUM with congratulations for the publica-

(Continued on page xxiv)

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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxii)

tion of André Vaillant's "I Thought I Knew My France". It introduces a new note into your magazine, though the Lord knows that humor is little published and less appreciated.

I am for your editorial policy not so much in spite of your frequent devil-baiters, as because of them. History would in my opinion be making if you could arrange a regular debate between a full-fledged New Dealer and one of Us. It would be enlightening, as the former would be forced to bring into the light many phases which are now presented attractively to the gullible public, but which under fire from any sane controversialist would become the farcical emptinesses they really are.

More power to you.

JOE HUGHES

Ponderosa, N. M.

623

PUBLIC GULLIBILITY

SIR: About four months ago I picked up a copy of THE MERCURY from the newsstand in Union Station in Chicago because it was small enough to be convenient for a lady to carry — and presto! — I am a permanent subscriber.

The article, "Revolution in Michigan" in the April issue, is the sanest analysis of the problem of democracy in America that I have yet found. I am continuously appalled at the gullibility of the American public, which licks up the glittering froth of the newspapers and sees no connection whatever between one story and the next.

I also read "Class-War on the Campus", with thumbs up. I'm a stickler for freedom of thought, but I define it as judgment after an impartial consideration of both sides of a question, and I resent having either Conservatism or Radicalism crammed down my neck by any authority. I'm nothing but a teacher — of English at that, and we're supposed to be an addle-headed lot — but far ahead of skill in the use of commas or the

(Continued on page xxvi)

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(Continued from page xxiv)

ability to tell whether an infinitive is an adjective, an adverb, or a noun, I place the ability to read a piece of current American prose and do some sane, straight thinking about it. If I could see at the end of the twenty years of teaching I may yet do, one single man whom I had aroused to the importance of clear, intelligent thinking about the world in which he will earn his daily bread, I'd feel I was having a career.

DR. RACHEL SALISBURY

State Teachers College,
Platteville, Wis.



MILITARY DISPUTE

SIR: I am a little curious to know, historically, just what is meant by the language used by Major John W. Thomason, Jr., in his sketchy review of "A Diplomatic History of the United States" by Samuel Flagg Bemis. On page 247 he uses the following language:

Dr. Bemis does not think — and history is with his opinion — that the Treaty of Ghent would have obtained in all its articles if Pakenham's assault echelons had beaten down that musketry, and set their hands on New Orleans and the Mississippi mouth.

And again:

The American riflemen at New Orleans powerfully underwrote the Treaty of Ghent.

Like most of those writing in your magazine there is a palpable effort to avoid the use of plain, easily-understood English. Wherever possible in your publication, it has been my observation that following the example of Mr. Mencken, your writers and reviewers avoid direct statements.

If the language quoted means that the very excellent marksmanship of the frontier's men at the battle of New Orleans had any influence whatever upon any article in the Treaty of Ghent, then the quoted re-

marks are palpable errors or deliberate falsehoods. If, on the other hand, they are an attempt to say that Great Britain would have voided the Treaty, and renewed the war, in the event of Pakenham's victory, then they show a complete ignorance of Great Britain's internal situation at the close of 1814. Nor does Dr. Bemis in any line or syllable of his book arrive at either of the above conclusions.

For the information of Major Thomason, and your publication, permit me to call your attention to the fact that the Treaty of Ghent was signed on the 24th day of December, 1814, and the battle of New Orleans was fought and won by Jackson in the morning hours of January 8, 1815, sixteen days after the treaty was signed.

To us who have been taught to look to your publication as the fountain of all knowledge, and the mirror of wisdom, you should in the future avoid historical errors of this kind.

EUSTACE SMITH

Hutchinson, Kan.



MAJOR THOMASON REPLIES

SIR: Dr. Eustace Smith has a perfect right to his opinion on the directness or other features of my prose style. I have an equal right to my opinions on Dr. Bemis' valuable history of American diplomacy. If Dr. Smith doesn't like my reviews, he is certainly at liberty to draw up his own. As to the question of fact, you will find, if you care to look, a footnote of the author's on p. 168: "Jackson's victory at New Orleans, January 8, 1815, after the signing of the peace, but before it went into effect at ratification, of course removed any shadow of doubt about the status of Louisiana." That, with the context, pp. 163-169, indicate that Dr. Bemis considered the matter debatable, at least. This passage, in its entirety, accounts for the two statements in my review to which Dr. Eustace Smith took exception. I hold with my view as written.

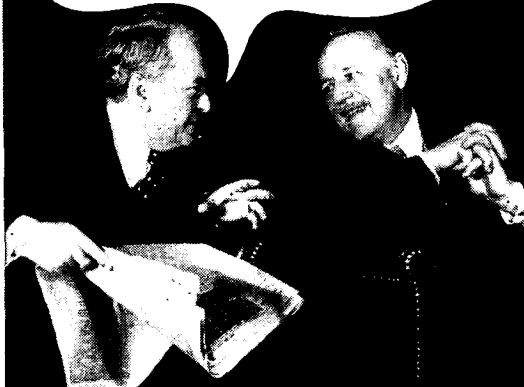
I might add that I did not think it neces-

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THE OPEN FORUM

(Continued from page xxvi)

sary, because of the type of MERCURY reader which I have assumed to be in the majority, to include a grammar-school lesson in history when I reviewed the book in question. Perhaps I was wrong. Still, I'd rather the good Dr. didn't use such words as: deliberate falsehoods. And if this widely-informed chap really ascribes any sense of international morality to the British government under Lord Castlereagh, nothing that I could say or show would impress him.

I may add that I regret having touched off Dr. Smith's culverins in this manner: he apparently goes around at half-cock. And it is likely to happen to him again.

JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.
Washington, D. C.

IN BEHALF OF LITERATURE

SIR: Mr. O'Brien raised an interesting question in THE OPEN FORUM on "what is wrong with American literature". The answer is simple. So simple in fact that he must have thought of it himself a dozen times.

We have little patience with the artist in words who writes out of an inner necessity, whose desire for self-expression is satisfied only by putting words on paper. Such a hare-brained and impractical idea is quite beyond our understanding. Let a man sail to the South Seas or fly over the Dry Tortugas or read Karl Marx and whang! he is an author of repute, ranking with Shakespeare maybe. But an *artist* like James Branch Cabell can turn out immaculate prose for years on end without the average Americano either knowing or caring what it is all about. As a nation we are still in short pants and our dominant ambition is to get our hooks on a wad of money, as quickly as possible, and to raise hell with it.

It is, of course, a mistake to put *all* Americans in this category. There are a few people of taste and judgment who deplore this condition and sincerely hope for something better. To these folk generally,

and to Mr. O'Brien specifically, I hereby offer a suggestion. Without benefit of newspaper or radio publicity, or the blessings of Holy Church or the American Academy of Arts and Letters, let them band together in an organization sworn to uphold and support the professional author, the writing man; a reader and writer alliance. And at the same time let them peacefully consign the various baseball players and movie stars and Presidential advisors to hell-and-gone.

It takes guts to produce a decent national literature and until we develop guts we'll just have to worry along with the rubbish we now have. The pity of it is that, despite intelligent editors, our journals, daily, weekly, and monthly, are rapidly assuming the appearance of pawnshops, and we, the poor suckers who are compelled willy-nilly to frequent them, must waste so much time on colored glass merchandised in the big way, and leave the rarest, the most precious gems, to languish in the dank weeds of contemporary neglect.

R. E. WESTMAN
White Plains, N. Y.

GAMBLING

SIR: Mr. W. P. Munger's article "Lotteries Officially Approved" manifests an increasingly stronger trend to make gambling respectable by making it legal; that is, the government is to take a hand in the game. This is precisely what has happened to the liquor traffic — Uncle Sam has become, in part, a bartender. But legal sanction or participation in such evils as these or any other does not make them good; it makes them worse because they are then made to appear good. It is like labeling carbolic acid cough syrup. Gambling, of which lottery is a phase, is inherently anti-social and ostensibly wrong, even if it is used to serve good ends. Bad means never commend good ends ultimately. The annals of decaying Rome are replete with just such casuistry of giving legal sanction to destructive vices. And with us, it is no sign of progress or social health

(Continued on page xxx)

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THE OPEN FORUM

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that we should propose to make vices parade as virtues. Gambling is mutual thievery in which the members agree to take, if lucky, the earnings of the rest without the slightest compensation. And finally, it creates a most despicable and disastrous frame of mind in that it inculcates the idea that something can be had for nothing. Imagine a society, already sick nigh unto death, trying to revive and perpetuate itself with lottery tickets!

This writer considers *THE MERCURY* one of the best in the whole magazine rack. Not paying out any servile flattery—only honestly acknowledging a personal opinion.

P. BRINKMAN, JR.

Portland, Ore.

BIRTH CONTROL PROGRESS

SIR: The article on abortion by Dr. A. J. Rongy in the February *MERCURY* calls attention to an appalling situation, but suggests no adequate solution. Evidently Dr. Rongy does not agree with the opinion of some of the most eminent physicians in the United States that wider dissemination of approved methods of contraception will be the most potent factor in reducing the number of abortions. On the contrary, he states: "Another important contributing factor to the increased number of abortions, especially among the middle classes, is so-called birth control propaganda, and the confidence that is being placed by a great majority of women in the effectiveness of the various contraceptive devices popularized by birth control clinics. . . . It is not generally known that there is no contraceptive device utilized by the wife that will insure against pregnancy."

Few branches of preventive medicine can show 96.5 per cent success. Yet that is the record of clinical birth control as prescribed in 100 medically directed centers during 1935. Further, many cases classed as "failures" were not due to failure of the method itself, but to admitted carelessness on the part of the patient in failing to use the

method or to follow instructions. Women advised in these centers were not of the "middle class", but underprivileged, 41 per cent of them being on Relief, and many of them with scant education and little knowledge of English.

A sample of 981 cases in New York City birth control centers, carefully followed up for one year, shows only two unexplained pregnancies. Five failures had been due to the patient's inability to return to the centers for supplies, and twenty-nine failures to patients' admitted lack of co-operation in using the method. However, the total number of "failures", thirty-six, was equal to only 3.6 per cent of this group.

Dr. Rongy is correct in saying that no contraceptive device will "insure" against pregnancy. The need for further research in the perfection of contraceptives is recognized by all birth control advocates. But if a present clinical method can keep 945 out of 981 desperately poor women from unwanted pregnancy and from abortion, is it still not worth prescribing?

Unquestionably, many women resort to abortion because of failure of "drugstore" methods of contraception, of the much advertised "feminine hygiene" products, or of the "safe period" theories. But this is another argument for the prescription of reliable contraceptive methods by qualified physicians.

ERIC M. MATSNER, M.D.

Medical Director

American Birth Control League
New York City

COMEDY OF SATAN

SIR: Comedy of Satan reproving the sin he provokes. F.D.R.'s excuse for the New Deal rationalizing of the Supreme Court is that it can't keep up with its work. Cause thereof: The review of the unconstitutional legislation that F.D.R. says Congress must pass.

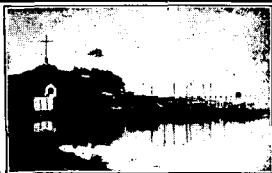
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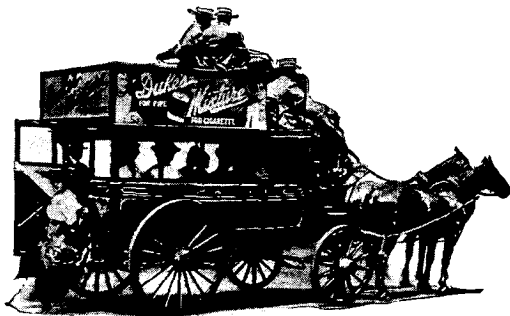
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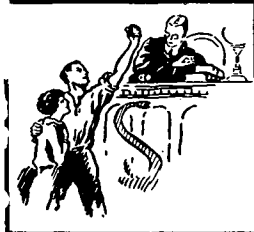
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